# Visualizing Emotions in the Ancient Near East

Edited by: Kipfer, Sara

Abstract: The history of emotion is an important interdisciplinary research field, not least because it touches fundamental questions about the distinction between psychobiology-based universals und sociocultural, path-dependent and thus relative peculiarities. Conceptual incongruities between what is today understood as emotion and various views on emotions in antiquity should not distract from the fact that, while emotions do have history, they substantially belong to all human experience as such. Visual media and images open perspectives for transcultural research that differ from the testimony of texts. Their study can thus make a major contribution to a better understanding of emotions in the Ancient Near East. How where gestures, body postures, facial expressions etc. visualized in images from Mesopotamia, the Levant and Egypt and what role does the visualization play in communicating emotions? The first part of the present volume takes concrete examples as a starting point and discusses the fundamental question whether or not emotions were represented and can thus be studied in Ancient Near Eastern art. Approaches and arguments are controversial: Some authors argue that there are no visualizations of emotions, but only of cultural roles and ritual embodiments. Their view is contrasted by other contributors, who assume that one may detect non-verbal expressions hiding emotions in visual representations and that it is crucial to specify the appropriate tools and methodologies to interpret them in an adequate way. The second part offers five additional theoretical reflexions from comparative, linguistic and art-historical perspectives. With such a broad interdisciplinary approach including Assyriology, Egyptology, Near Eastern archaeology and Hebrew Bible/Old Testament studies, the volume offers a large panorama of the most important research positions on a fundamental topic. The book results from workshop discussions held in June 2015 during the 61st Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Bern and Geneva. Contributors include John Baines, Dominik Bonatz, Izak Cornelius, Margaret Jaques, Othmar Keel, Sara Kipfer, Florian Lippke, Silvia Schroer, Andreas Wagner, Elisabeth Wagner-Durand, and Wolfgang Zwickel.

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Sara Kipfer (*1980) studied Protestant Theology in Bern and Heidelberg. She holds a PhD of the University of Bern (2013) and is the author of *Der bedrohte David. Eine exegetische und rezeptionsgeschichtliche Studie zu 1Sam 16–1Kön 2* (Studies of the Bible and its Reception 3), Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015. From 2013 to 2015 she contributed as a postdoc to a research project funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation on "Emotions in the Old Testament. Analysing linguistic metaphors as an interdisciplinary approach in the field of research concerning historical emotions" (PI: Prof. Andreas Wagner). Since September 2015 she is an SNSF-funded fellow at the universities of Chicago and Heidelberg. Her research focuses on reception-historical exegesis, biblical anthropology and prophecy.

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# Preface

This volume is the product of a workshop held at the 61st Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (RAI) in Geneva and Bern on 22–26 June 2015. I would like to thank the organizers of the Rencontre for accepting my application for the workshop, foremost Mirko Novák and Sabine Ecklin, for their encouragement and help.

Most of the articles in this volume are expanded and revised versions of papers presented at the morning panel during the workshop "Visualizing Emotions and Senses in the Ancient Near East", which I organized together with Ainsley Hawthorn (Yale University) and Anne-Caroline Rendu Loisel (University of Geneva). An unpublished article by Othmar Keel, which he wrote in the 1990s, has been added to the volume. Wolfgang Zwickel, who was also present at the workshop, agreed to revise and reprint an earlier published article of his own. Karen Sonik accepted my invitation to contribute her thoughts on the subject of emotion in Mesopotamian art, while John Baines in his epilogue comments on the volume from the perspective of Egyptian art. I am very grateful to all the authors for their huge effort.

I would also like to offer my thanks to all contributors to the workshop for their constructive and well-focused presentations and to everyone for participating and further stimulating the discussion during and after the Rencontre, especially to Irene Winter. It was a very fruitful interdisciplinary conversation and I am excited to present some of its most important results in this volume.

The workshop at the Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale was financed by the Promotion Fund for Early Career Researchers at the University of Bern (Nachwuchsförderungs-Projektpool der Mittelbauvereinigung der Universität Bern). The Berne University Research Foundation and the Reformed Churches of the Cantons Bern-Jura-Solothurn funded the printing costs for the volume.

As editor of this volume, I am especially grateful to Christoph Uehlinger, senior editor of the series Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, not only for accepting this volume for publication in this series and for his help throughout the editing process, but also for his many supportive suggestions and his expertise in improving the text. I would also like to sincerely thank Andreas Wagner, who encouraged and enabled me to organize the workshop during my time as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Bern on the Swiss National Science Foundation-funded research project on "Emotions in the Old Testament".

And last but not least I am very grateful to Marshall Cunningham, who helped me in the editing of the English articles.

Sara Kipfer, Heidelberg / Bern 2017

# Visualizing Emotions in the Ancient Near East
# An Introduction

Sara KIPFER

## *1. Some Introductory Remarks*

The generally held scholarly opinion was – or perhaps still is – that ancient Near Eastern art does not represent any emotion.[1] Indeed, visualizations of emotions are elusive: the depicted faces in Assyrian reliefs are homogenous and stereotyped,[2] figurines from the southern Levant keep a straight face, and Egyptian images[3] are to a large extent standardized. In many images the representation of emotions or feelings seem to be dispensable.[4] However, these observations should not blind us to the fact that many depictions represent situations and groupings of motifs that are highly emotional: the depiction of ritual mourning, erotic scenes, aggression and violence, triumph and joy. The main questions are as follows: What connection do those images have with emotion? How can we analyze them? And finally: What do we learn from them about ancient Near Eastern concepts of emotion? In any case, it will not be possible to investigate emotions as such, but only their dispositions, dramaturgy, and accompanying, observable evidence.[5]

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1 See e.g. Schroer 2002a: 1080: „Auch die Darstellung von Affekten spielt mit Ausnahme ritualisierter Trauergesten in der ao. Kunst keine Rolle.“ Similarly Nunn 2009: 134-35 summarizes: “Natürlich hat es Emotionen gegeben, sie wurden aber nicht in Gesichtszügen gezeigt. Ein kurzer Blick reicht, um festzustellen, dass die Gesichtsausdrücke aller abgebildeter Götter und Menschen gleich sind: kein Lachen, keine Freude, keine Bekundung von Bewunderung oder Staunen, kein Weinen, keine Angstgefühle, keine Trauer. Dass dies so ist, hängt mit der Stellung des Individuums in der altorientalischen Gesellschaft zusammen. Nicht das Individuum Mensch zählt, sondern seine soziale Stellung.“ For more examples from the history of scholarship in the area, see also Cornelius in this volume.

2 See e.g. Larsen 2001: 277: “Instead we must conclude that an artistic convention is at play here, one that apparently prohibited the exposure of feelings in terms of open, facial expressions, even such positive ones as aggressiveness or righteous anger.”

3 For an overview on “Gefühlsbewegungen” in ancient Egypt, see Altenmüller 1977.

4 See Keel in this volume.

5 See Böhme 1997: 536. Hammer-Tugendhat / Lutter 2010: 9 state: „Als (Kultur-) WissenschaftlerInnen haben wir es daher immer mit Repräsentationen zu tun, seien sie sprachlich, visuell oder akustisch, seien sie gegenwärtig oder historisch. Emotionen sind immer nur näherungsweise bzw. ‚übersetzt‘ zugänglich und können nicht von ihrer kulturell geformten Vermittlung abgelöst werden.“ See also Schnell 2015: 18-23.

### *1.1. What are emotions? Some reflections on the object of study and the difficulties of a definition*

What are emotions? Are they universal and part of the *conditio humana*, the human condition, and thus also inherent in people of the ancient Near East, or are they bound to a very strict cultural concept and thus not older than the term "emotion"? To what extent are emotions shaped historically and socially? Are they restricted to the "inner" feelings of an individual, or are they also closely connected to the body[6] and comprehensible in rituals and behaviors of the collective?[7] None of these questions can be answered fully and this is not the place to give a generally applicable definition.[8] Most of the articles in this volume use their own definitions following their disciplinary approaches.[9] However, in raising these questions it becomes obvious not only that it is impossible to analyze emotions as such but also that it is very difficult to gather evidence of their visual, literary, linguistic, material etc. representations in the ancient Near East. I am not the first to point out this dilemma: It can be taken for granted that people in the ancient Near East had

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6 Böhme 1997: 534 states a shift in meaning: „Die Herkunft des Wortes Gefühl aus dem eigenleiblichen Spüren aber wahrt den Zusammenhang von Gefühlen mit dem Leiblichen auch dann noch, wenn Gefühle zunehmend als seelisches Erlebnis verstanden wurden. ‚Seelisch' waren eher die inneren Repräsentanten (die ‚Vorstellungen') der leiblichen Gefühle, während heute das Verhältnis umgekehrt ist: ‚Emotionen' sind primär innere (seelische) Abläufe, die von körperlichen Symptomen (wie Herzklopfen, Schamröte, weiche Knie) ‚begleitet' werden. Beides zusammen, die seelisch-körperlichen Emotionsabläufe werden behaviouristisch oder handlungstheoretisch als ‚Verhalten' oder ‚Interaktion' verstanden, wodurch der Konnex von Gefühl und Leiblichkeit endgültig zerrissen ist. Dabei ist die Grundbedeutung von ‚Emotion', das von lat. motus, mofio herrührt und auch hier vor allem körperliche Bewegung meint, verlassen." Wierzbicka 1999: 2 states: "The English word emotion combines in its meaning a reference to 'feeling', a reference to 'thinking', and a reference to a person's body."

7 See e.g. Schnell 2015: 133-139.

8 See e.g. Otto / Euler / Mandl 2000: 11: "Es ist ein weit verbreitetes Missverständnis, dass eine wissenschaftliche Erforschung der Emotion mit einer genauen Bestimmung des Gegenstandsbereiches zu beginnen hat. Eine solche exakte Bestimmung würde voraussetzen, dass man das zu untersuchende Phänomen bereits in all seinen Erscheinungsformen und Ausprägungen genau kennt." This fact, however, does not mean that the search for a metalanguage should be given up lightly. The question of metalanguage and an operational definition of "emotion" is a key issue in emotion research, as Wierzbicka 2010: 379 has demonstrated. See the discussion between Izard 2010, Wierzbicka 2010, and others.

9 See e.g. Wagner-Durand and Cornelius in this volume. See also Kruger 2015: 396-401. So far there is no consensus about the definition of emotion. See Schnell 2015: 33: „Jede Wissenschaftsdisziplin erschafft also den Gegenstand, nach dem sie sucht. Emotionen werden als psychophysiologische Prozesse, soziale Interaktionen, kognitive Aktivitäten, Praktiken, Handlungsbereitschaften, u.a. definiert. Es gibt nicht Emotionen an sich, sondern bei der Suche nach den Emotionen schaffen zugleich wir den Untersuchungsgegenstand – sogar die Hirnforschung agiert so, weil sie die beobachteten neutralen Prozesse interpretieren muss." See also Otto / Euler / Mandel 2000, 11-18; Schiewer 2014: 13-14.

emotions since these are more or less "universal". At the same time, we are faced with a gulf of thousands of years separating us from the past we are studying, as well as a vast difference in cultural traditions and physical reality.[10] From this perspective it seems hardly possible to learn about ancient emotion. The appropriateness of applying the modern concept of emotions to antiquity has rightly been questioned. It is clear that specific methods and tools for the analysis of representations of emotions and concepts of emotion are needed.[11] And it is crucial to keep in mind that emotions always occupy a position within a field of multiple tensions (*Spannungsfeld*): biopsychological continuities and cultural variation, collectivism and individualism, body and mind, universalism and relativism, essentialism and constructivism, inwardness (feelings) and outward appearance (gestures).[12]

Not only is the object of research to a great extent unclear, the terminologies that have been used in research are also manifold.[13] What makes it especially difficult is that no general term for emotion has been identified in Sumerian, Akkadian, or Biblical Hebrew. The term "emotion" as it is normally used today is an invention of the Enlightenment.[14] Nevertheless it cannot be eliminated from the current debate. In cultural studies – where the "emotional

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10 See e.g. Larsen 2001: 276: "As Assyriologists we are faced with a gulf of thousands of years separating us from the past we are studying, as well as a vast difference in cultural traditions and physical reality, so imposing our own categories on the statements we are trying to interpret is likely to lead us astray in many instances. The attempt to understand the individuality of the ancients, their intentions, fears and emotions is hazardous, in particular when we are dealing with a society like that of Mesopotamia, where we find 'no native self-appraisal.' [Oppenheim 1967: 57] On the other hand, this is our task."

11 E.g. Wagner 2012: 36: "Für die Erforschung historischer Emotionen können wir daher nicht so vorgehen, dass Theoreme und methodische Mittel, die aus der gegenwartsbezogenen Forschung zu Emotionen stammen, einfach nur auf die historischen Texte angewendet werden – was übrigens schon bei der Benennung und Eingrenzung von Emotionen anfängt." See also Schnell 2015: 18-23.

12 See e.g. Lutz / White 1986: 405-436.

13 Böhme 1997: 528 speaks of a "Begriffsdilemma". See also Hammer-Tugendhat / Lutter 2010: 10-11.

14 See Dixon 2012. Campe / Weber 2014: 2 stated: "It was only in the course of the eighteenth century, however, that the concept of interiority became firmly related to emotionality and thus central to understanding individual existence. This historical moment is a turning point both for the semantics of interiority and for the understanding of emotion." Lasater, forthcoming, draws the conclusion: "I want to suggest that any effort to locate 'emotions' in the Hebrew Bible or the ancient Near East is comparable to hunting the snark. If we want our hunt to be successful, we will turn away from 'the emotions' and toward something more like the psychological taxonomy that the emotions displaced in the late-modern period: namely, the taxonomy of 'passions and affections.' 'The emotions' are simply not to be found in the Hebrew Bible or in the historical contexts behind its emergence. [...] Expecting to find 'the emotions' before the modern period is anachronistic." I would argue however, that it is important to look for "concepts of emotion" (e.g. expressions of inner and outer body parts, interdependencies of rationality, intentionality, normative evaluations) in the ancient Near East first, and only then to search for the corresponding "labeling" (e.g. "feelings", "passion", "affection", "emotion" etc.).

turn"[15] has been proposed – and in the subfield of history known as "emotionology"[16] the term is used as an umbrella designation for many different interpretations and disciplinary approaches. However, it is important to keep in mind that the term is anachronistic and that our understanding of "emotion" is not identical with what was experienced in the ancient Near East.[17]

### *1.2. How are emotions referred to in texts? Some insights from textual analyses about concepts of emotion in the ancient Near East*

Until recently, knowledge about the conceptualization, ritualization, etc. of emotions in the ancient Near East was very limited. Investigations of Biblical[18] and ancient Near Eastern texts generally[19] demonstrated that in the ancient Near East emotions are often not simply seen as something interior of the body, but rather as reflecting external circumstances.[20] Emotions are something coming from outside into the human body, "attacking" and "affecting" someone. In a few cases they are even related to demons.[21] The analysis of texts further demonstrates that activities, behaviors, and practices are closely linked to what are generally called "emotions" today.[22] It can be assumed that emotions in the ancient Near East cannot be reduced to "inner feelings"; rather, they also include action and are therefore constitutive and essential for the plot in narratives.[23] The same emotions can be commanded or forbidden in legal

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15 For an overview, see e.g. Schnell 2015: 15-18; Hammer-Tugendhat / Lutter 2010.

16 See Stearns / Stearns 1985: 813-836. Stearns / Stearns introduced the term "emotionology" to distinguish the collective emotional standards of a society from the emotional experiences of individuals and groups.

17 See Cornelius in this volume and Mirguet 2016.

18 E.g. Gillmayr-Bucher 2010; Kruger 2000, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2015; Kipfer 2016; Strawn 2012; Wagner $^{2}$2011. The topic is especially popular in Biblical Studies, as the program unit „Bible and Emotion" at the Society of Biblical Literature and the research group "Emotions and the Biblical World" at the European Association of Biblical Literature demonstrate.

19 E.g. Jaques 2006; Larsen 2001.

20 This is also true on a more general level. See e.g. Campe / Weber 2014: 1: "The notion of interiority and its central role in our understanding of emotional life and individuality are phenomena that belong to classical Western modernity. From antiquity to early modernity, affects or passions were mostly conceived of either as external physiological forces that act on a passive subject and provoke it to engage in certain actions or as scene-like situations in which the affected person responds to an ensemble of other actors under specific circumstances."

21 See Steinert 2014: 527.530-31 and Kipfer 2016: 67. James 2013: 825 summarizes: "In general, though, biblical writings conceptualize emotions of all kinds as uncontainable forces expressed in and through the human body."

22 Concerning the close connection of emotions to causes, see e.g. Wagner 2012: 59-60: "Emotionen und ihre Bindung an Gründe".

23 Mirguet 2016: 463 comes to the conclusion: "First, a lexical inquiry has shown that Biblical Hebrew words that are usually translated by emotional terms, such as love or

contexts.[24] They thus play an important part in the whole moral system. Control over emotions is frequently prescribed in Mesopotamian wisdom literature.[25] In some behavioral omina („Verhaltensomina") every expression of strong emotions is seen negatively.[26]

### *1.3. How are emotions referred to in texts and images? Some considerations about intermediality*[27]

Hitherto images have rarely been analyzed for their emotional content.[28] However, analysis of ancient Near Eastern images is fundamental for a better understanding of texts and concepts of emotion in general.[29] On the one hand, images can function as a corrective of preconceptions about emotions in ancient Near Eastern texts. On the other hand, texts can help us to better understand images and their concepts of emotion. I would like to demonstrate this

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fear, exceed our emotional realm, as they also include actions, ritual gestures, and physical sensations. I thus suggest that Biblical Hebrew does not organize human experience by delimiting a strictly emotional dimension comparable to ours."

24 See e.g. Chan 2012: 325-326: "The decision to include activities, behaviors, and practices associated with happiness acknowledges that, for many cultures, sentiments and performance are often inseparably linked. That is to say, many cultures do not view joyful behavior merely as an epiphenomenal *expression* of a subjective emotional state as is the case in many Western countries. One example must suffice: in the OT, both 'love' and 'joy' can be commanded in legal contexts, which suggests that something more than just internal (and subjective) affect states are in mind – or, perhaps better, in practice."

25 See Jaques in this volume. See also Steinert 2012: 113-117. Wagner 2012: 58 specifies concerning the Hebrew Bible: "Ein Ideal, Emotionen pauschal 'unter Verschluss' zu halten, wird im A.T. nicht erhoben, weil es, so meine These, nicht der grundsätzlichen Denkmöglichkeit über Emotionen entspricht. Postulate gegen Einzelemotionen dienen nur dem Eindämmen der (teils negativen) Folgen der Einzelemotionen, nicht dem Eindämmen von Emotionalität überhaupt."

26 See Steinert 2012: 115.

27 See e.g. Keel 1992; Schroer 2006: 9-11.

28 E.g. Zwickel 2012 and in this volume; Staubli 2015: 253-258. For a cognitive approach, see Strawn 2014: 91-134.

29 See e.g. Böhme 1997: 535: "Um den historischen Wandel von Gefühlen und ihres Erlebens zu verstehen, ist man auf Zeugnisse angewiesen, welche lesbar sind als die Spuren dieses am eigenen Leib Gewahrwerdens von Gefühlen. Dabei ist die historische Anthropologie der Gefühle nicht auf schriftliche Quellen des Gefühlslebens vergangener Kulturen eingeschränkt, sondern sie stützt sich auch, sofern der Bezug auf das Spüren am eigenen Leib gewahrt bleibt, auf Musik, Bilder, Filme, Architekturen, Landschaften, selbst auf Dinge und Geräte." See also Hammer-Tugendhat / Lutter 2010: 9: „Unterschiedliches Quellenmaterial lässt sich daraufhin befragen, wie Emotionen Ausdruck verliehen wird und wie die Weisen, Emotionen zu empfinden, eingeübt werden. Hier geht es also um kulturelle Modelle und Muster, die nicht starr sind, sondern in ihrem sozialen Gebrauch ‚verkörpert', aber auch gestaltet und verändert werden und die damit ihrerseits beeinflussen, was und wie wahrgenommen und empfunden wird."

on three different levels, namely: a) facial expression,[30] b) gestures and body posture, and c) image and motif constellation.

### *a) Facial expression*

There are texts which implicitly or explicitly relate "facial expressions" to different emotions: in Akkadian texts the face (*panu*) can be worried, disturbed (*adāru*),[31] angry (*ba'āšu*),[32] friendly, pleasant (*banû*),[33] dark (*ekēlu*),[34] or happy, radiant (*namāru*).[35] In some cases the change of mood is expressed by a change in color of the face and sometimes the emotions even causes a change in the configuration of the face.[36] Similar expressions are attested in the Hebrew Bible: One can "loosen one's face" (אֶעְזְבָה פָנַי Job 9:27), making one's face "bold" (הֵעֵזָה פָנֶיהָ Prov 7:13) or "sad" (כִּי־בְרֹעַ פָּנִים Eccl 7:3); sometimes it is even possible to read sympathy or antipathy from someone's face (Gen 31:2.5).[37] Does this mean that more is described in words than can be seen in images?[38] If one uses the Microsoft Project Emotion API[39] for an empirical experiment, some astonishing results are produced. According to this Emotion Recognition program, the plaque showing a nude female (clay, Isin-Larsa period, 2000-1800 BCE, Tell Asmar, Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago, A 17891) displays 98,3% happiness and its face is only 1,7% neutral. The nude

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30 See Hassin / Aviezer / Bentin 2013.

31 For examples see CAD, A/1 103-104.

32 For examples see CAD, B 5.

33 For examples see CAD, B 91.

34 For examples see CAD, E 64.

35 For examples see CAD, N/1 213.216.

36 For more examples see e.g. Jaques 2006: 82-83; Mayer 2010: 308-309.311-314 et al. I am very grateful to Nicholas Postgate for mentioning the disc of Yaijdun-Lim to me. In this inscription, Yaijdun-Lim announces that he had "removed the *hi-ip-pí* of the Banks of the Euphrates". Dossin (1978: 252) rendered: "j'effaçai les blessures des rives de l'Euphrate". Similar expressions can be found in two other Mari texts which use the phrase *hippam ša panī nasāhum* ("to remove the *hippi* of the face"); see Dossin 1978: 252. According to Nicholas Postgate (pers. comm.), the phrase means "to remove the facial lines of distress", and that when Yaijdun-Lim talks of the Banks of the Euphrates, he means that he was banishing the signs of distress among "(the population of) the Banks of the Euphrates". See Nicholas Postgate: http://people.ds.cam.ac.uk/-mjw65/cda/lemmata.htmlb under *hippum*, viewed on 03.12.2015. For further discussions see Heimpel 1998: 67.

37 See for more examples Johnson $^{2}$1964: 41-46; Simian-Yofre 1989: 634-635; Gruber 1980.

38 See also Brunner 1984: 277-279.

39 For more information about this project, see: https://www.microsoft.com/cognitive-services/en-us/emotion-api/documentation: "The Emotion API beta takes an image as an input, and returns the confidence across a set of emotions for each face in the image, as well as bounding box for the face, from the Face API. The emotions detected are happiness, sadness, surprise, anger, fear, contempt, disgust or neutral. These emotions are communicated cross-culturally and universally via the same basic facial expressions, where are [sic] identified by Emotion API."

goddess holding lotus flowers and lions (horse frontlet, ivory, Neo-Assyrian, ca. 9th-8th century BCE, Nimrud, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 61.197.5) displays 68,8% neutral emotions, 10,3% sadness, 10,4% surprise, 3,5% happiness, and 4,9% fear. By contrast, the so-called "Queen of the Night" (clay, Old Babylonian, 19th-18th century BCE, southern Iraq, British Museum, London, 2003,0718.1) gets 86,8% neutral and only 11,7% happiness. These examples are chosen at random and should not be used to prove some specific emotion in ancient Near Eastern Art.[40] However, because the program detects facial expression in ancient Near Eastern art, the generally-held opinion that no facial expressions are depicted should be called into question.[41]

### *b) Gestures and body posture*

Gestures and body posture are even more relevant for a reevaluation of emotion concepts in the ancient Near East.[42] Both can be related to emotion in texts and images.[43]

It has long been observed that mourning rites,[44] joyful festivities,[45] as well as aggression,[46] erotic scenes and sexual practices[47] were not only described in

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40 The Emotion Recognition program unfortunately gives no result for the figurine of a fertility goddess (Revadim, Late Canaanite period, 13th century BCE Clay, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, IAA 1982-219). See Cornelius and Schroer in this volume. Generally, I admit that there is a relatively high error rate, which means that the emotion can be detected on only a few plaques, figurines, sculptures, ivories etc. In some cases the program is also unreliable: Nefertiti (limestone and stucco, Amarna, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1340 BCE, Egyptian Museum, Berlin, ÄM 21300) shows different emotions: 90,8% neutral in one photograph, but 56,6% neutral and 41,5% happiness in another, dependent on angle of view and light.

41 For more information about the relation between facial expression and emotion see e.g. Ekman $^{2}$2007 or Freedberg 2014. The question whether emotions can be recognized from faces is, however, debated. See e.g. Schnell 2015: 234: "Denn die einschlägige Forschung zur Frage, inwieweit Emotionen an Gesichtsausdrücken abgelesen werden können, hat erstens konstatiert, dass 'nicht alle verbal benennbaren Emotionen in einen charakteristischen mimischen Ausdruck übersetzt werden' können, zweitens festgestellt, dass 'die Übersetzung der Gesichtssprache in die Wortsprache eher schwierig' ist." (quotations taken from Schmidt-Atzert 2000: 33).

42 McNiven 2000: 125 came to the conclusion for Greek art (especially painted pottery in the 6th and 7th century): „Lacking for facial indicators of emotion, we have to look at the other aspects of body language, especially to gestures […], in order to 'read' the emotional content of the image. Gestures are used to display a wide range of expressions, often in contexts where the circumstances are known, and, therefore, reasonable conclusions concerning the emotions being displayed can be drawn."

43 See e.g. Bonatz 2002: 146-148; Dominicus 1994.

44 See e.g. Keel $^{2}$1985: 319-320; Schroer 2002b; 2009: 299-321; 2011: 83-102; Volokhine 2008. See Cornelius in this volume.

45 See e.g. Keel $^{2}$1985: 335-339.

texts but also depicted in visual art. Gestures such as raising or bowing one's head,[48] both mentioned in texts and shown in images, may help us to get a fuller picture of emotional concepts. Generally speaking, "[g]estures and ritual actions are forms of nonverbal communication that can be literary ciphers for emotions."[49] This basic assumption concerning gestures is not without its problems since gestures are not universal but rather connected to particular cultural, social, religious etc. contexts.[50] In some cases the same gesture may stand for different emotions in different cultures.[51] The "clapping of hands" is a good example to demonstrate how body language is shaped culturally and can only be understood by carefully analyzing texts and images. In her study on this topic, Fox points out that in many cultural contexts this gestures stands for "joy and approval". In the Assyrian context, however, the clapping of hands may also be understood as a gesture of anger and anguish.[52] This makes it obvious that images play an important part when analyzing the larger context of ancient concepts of emotion.[53]

Images may help in understanding ancient Near Eastern concepts of emotion because they refer directly to the human body as a medium of communication.[54] And even if representations of the human body do not disclose interior feelings that are objective, visible, and comprehensible, they still have their own meaning and their own value.[55] The visually represented "body" is never simply an imitation or a reflection of the physical body but is shaped by cultural tropes.[56] In the ancient Near East emotions were also directly linked to

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46 See e.g. Berlejung 2005; Bahrani 2008. One impressive example from Egypt that was not previously mentioned shows a quarrel between two girls. See Limestone, pigment, Late Period, 26th Dynasty, ca. 650 BCE, Luxor, Tomb of Mentuemhet, inspired by the much earlier tomb of Menna, Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago, OIM 18828.

47 For an overview on erotic art in the ancient Near East, see Pinnock 1995, who concludes: "It becomes clear that a subject, apparently so simple and easy to single out when it influences human feelings strictly linked with morals and social orders, becomes quite difficult to interpret when one observes, as in this instance, the material evidence of distant cultures." (Pinnock 1995: 2531). See also Assante 2000, Wiggermann 2010: 419-426 (§ 6. Visual representation), and Cornelius in this volume. See also Cooper 1983: 378 "Iconographic representations of kissing".

48 See e.g. Steinert 2012: 198-200; Beuken 1993: 274-275.

49 James 2013: 825.

50 See Wagner-Durand in this volume.

51 See Bojowald 2015: 131-140.

52 Fox 1994: 49-60. See also Calabro 2014.

53 Assumptions such as „[d]as Darbieten der gehobenen Brüste impliziert wahrscheinlich auch Stolz" (Schroer 2016: 137) are not helpful; they need to be documented.

54 See e.g. Belting 2001. See also Winter 1989; 1996. For classical antiquity see the volume by Bodiou et al. 2006. Assmann 2009: 80-81 even speaks of "equivalence" of image and body in Egypt.

55 See Keel in this volume.

56 See e.g. Bahrani 2001, 40: "It must be stressed that in visual imagery, the body is never simply an imitation or a reflection of a physical body. Instead, it serves to represent the

bodily reactions and expressed through metonymies, as textual analysis demonstrates.

### *c) Image and motif constellation*

Finally, it is important to analyze the iconographic function within a system of signs (*Zeichensystem*) to learn more about concepts of emotion from images. Style, layout, and composition are important components of the image; they too need to be analyzed if one is to understand more about emotion concepts of emotion.[57] Metaphors, such as the dove which can be understood as a manifestation of mutual affection, or a drinking cup which can have different connotations of salvation and disaster, are important codes whose interpretation contributes to a better understanding of emotion concepts.[58] Features of the composition of figures, such as scale, say more about their relation and implicitly about dominance and weakness, power and impotence.[59] In some cases texts are directly added to images without necessarily corresponding to their emotional content.[60] In any case, texts aid our understanding of the cultural, religious, and symbolic context of images. Only then can images be appreciated as important sources for understanding more about the emotion concepts in the ancient Near East and about anthropology in general.[61]

## *1.4. How are emotions referred to images? Some insights from visual analyses into concepts of emotion*

There is a very strong link between images and emotions:[62] Images may represent emotions visually as well as evoke some sort of emotions in the beholder, even if they do not depict them directly.[63] Bahrani, for example, defines "speaking images".[64] One could state that images "produce" emotions. The affective content in pictures cannot simply be reduced to the viewer's

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body as well as an entire range of cultural tropes [...]." See also Asher-Greve 1997; Assante 2010; Nunn 2009; Kipfer / Schroer 2015; Rautman 2000 et al.

57 See Keel $^{2}$1985: fig. 68. The whole image can be understood as a "narrative" of what happened after the death of Akhenaten's daughter, including the expression of mourning.

58 See e.g. Schroer in this volume. See also Bonatz 2002: 151-155.

59 See e.g. Bonatz 2002: 142-148.

60 See e.g. Bonatz in this volume.

61 See e.g. Belting $^{4}$2011: „Bild-Anthropologie"; Porada 1995.

62 See e.g. Gombrich 1960 and his Psychology of Pictorial Representation.

63 See Wagner-Durand in this volume.

64 Bahrani 2014: 196-97.

projections; it is inherent in images.[65] Here it is fundamental to acknowledge that every "image" is more than just a piece of art: Votives are part of a relationship of exchange with the gods, lions, and sphinxes can protect the owner, etc. There is a large variety of deeds which have or might have been done with images: acts of blessings, cultic purifications, libations, erection, and destruction, throwing away or burying.[66] It's hard to think of how images would be made without a purpose, having a clear message for a specific public. To better understand the emotions that images may have evoked in the beholder it is important to collect as much information as possible about their find context.[67] Only within the proper context is it possible to reconstruct their "emotional content".

## *2. Overview of This Volume*

The primary concerns of the present volume are as follows: What can we learn about emotional concepts and the perception of emotion in the ancient Near East from visual art? Which gestures (*Gesten und Gebärden*), body postures, and motif constellations are used to express emotions? How do emotions such as "grief", "joy", "fear", "love", "anger" relate to social behavior, actions, and ritual practices that show up in ancient Near Eastern figurative art? Is it even possible to speak about emotions looking at ancient Near Eastern art or must images be reduced to displaying behaviors? And, last but not least, what is the function of emotion in ancient Near Eastern visual and textual communication,[68] and how does it relate to the ancient Near Eastern understanding of the human, gender, body, agency, etc.?[69]

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65 See Krois 2011: 233-251 in his article "Experiencing Emotion in Depictions. Being Moved without Motion?" p. 246-247: "The affective content in pictures cannot be the result of the viewer's projections or deliberate act of empathy. Neurologists explain that it is not possible to tickle yourself because the brain distinguishes expected from unexpected sensations, canceling out incoming redundant information. Similarly, you cannot consciously scare yourself by making a sudden loud noise. But a picture can surprise even the one who made it. The myth of Pygmalion in all its variations plays upon that fact."

66 See e.g. Wagner-Durand 2014: 39-40.

67 See e.g. Bonatz 2011: 287-312; 2002: 137-162.

68 Gillmayr-Bucher 2010: 279-280 states that emotions should not be isolated as interior psychological processes but as social and communicative phenomena.

69 E.g. Keel [2]1985: 308: "Psychological concepts usually characterize parts of the body or particular features closely linked to the body or particular features closely linked to these parts of the body. Thus, *npš* means throat, breathing, living being, life, desire; *'p* means nose, snorting, anger; *rḥm* means womb, and in the plural compassion; *kbwd* means weight, (impressive) appearance, splendor, distinction; *g'wn* means height, loftiness, pride. In view of this tendency, it is not surprising that the (inner) relation of man to God is also viewed in terms of distinct manifestations and fixed postures, gestures, and actions."

With its multidisciplinary and multifaceted approach, the present volume addresses different aspects of a difficult, and until now largely unexplored topic. The book is divided into two parts: The first part presents an overview of the visualization of emotion in the ancient Near East, focusing on different aspects such as facial expression, gestures, and body posture. Some of the articles deal only with Mesopotamian art while others include Egyptian and Levantine material. The period addressed ranges from the third millennium BCE to Hellenistic times. The second part is more theoretical and consists of reviews from different perspectives, namely comparative methodology, linguistics, and art history.

*Part I: Facial Expression, Gestures and Body Posture – Different Aspects of Visualizing Emotions (Case Studies)*

The first two articles are concerned primarily with portraiture and the question of inwardness and the absence of facial expression. The volume opens with a previously unpublished article written by Othmar Keel in the 1990s (*Porträts altorientalischer Herrscher? Individualität oder Rolle*). In his introduction he points to the importance of the study of physiognomy in the 19th century, demonstrating how Schopenhauer and his contemporaries (among them H. A. Layard) were convinced by its informative value. Until the 20th century, scholars related ancient portraits of kings to biblical texts in the search for the rulers' "identity". From the present perspective it is obvious that portraits from ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia do not show an individual physiognomy: only inscriptions, stylistic analyses etc. help to identify a ruler depicted in a particular image. Portraits thus have a non-individual physiognomy, representing rather an idealized image related to the social role of the ruler. Not only is individualization absent in these portraits, so also is the expression of mood and emotional disposition (*Gemütsstimmung*) (34-37). Assyrian reliefs in particular do not show any facial expression. This did not prevent Paul-Émile Botta in 1843 from ascribing specific "feelings" to the figures in the reliefs. In some cases, emotions can at most be deduced from posture. The case of Egyptian art is similar, although more realistic portraits may occur at certain periods (37-41).[70] Keel concludes with the notion that although the portraits do not show an individual physiognomy and feelings, they do show us how the ruler represented himself and in which social role and function he wanted to be seen.

Likewise Dominik Bonatz, in the first part of his article (*Der stumme Schrei. Kritische Überlegungen zu Emotionen als Untersuchungsfeld der altorientalischen Bildwissenschaft*), points to physiognomy in the 19th century. He refers to Carl Huter, who developed a psycho-physiology that under-

[70] For a recent summary of the debate in Egyptian art see Laboury 2009 and 2010.

stood the body as a mirror of inner feelings. Although this method is strongly criticized, physiognomy still plays an important part in studies about the ancient history of the body ("Studien zur antiken Körpergeschichte" 56). Bonatz uses Huter's theory to demonstrate that it is problematic to apply a pattern to analyze ancient body language. First, such a pattern is not "bildwissenschaftlich fundiert" (is not grounded in the theory of images); second, it derives from Eurocentric conceptions of body and image; and third, it does not consider the images in their historical context as a point of departure for the argument (57-58). Huter's theory is, however, useful in demonstrating that the portraits in Assyrian reliefs exhibit very stereotyped faces. They reflect strong conventions and do not show any trait of character (*Charaktereigenschaft*) or emotion. Although the faces do not show any emotion, this should not keep us from seeking emotional gestures (*emotionale Gestik*). In the second part of his article, Bonatz therefore analyses different gestures on Assyrian reliefs and reassesses them in relation to emotional content. Only a few images are considered, but in every case the Assyrian enemies show emotions while the Assyrians do not. The victims' gestures reflect emotions such as fear, despair, powerlessness, and they therefore have a clear function in the visual narrative. In the third part of his article, Bonatz analyses the significance of texts and images in Assyrian reliefs with regard to what they say about emotions. He suggests that emotions were mentioned in the describing texts but not in the reliefs themselves. He concludes that the Assyrian ideology of images (*Bildideologie*) did not leave any space for the venting of emotions.

Elisabeth Wagner-Durand, in her response to Dominik Bonatz (*The Visualization of Emotions – Potentials and Obstacles: A Response to Dominik Bonatz*), stresses the importance of a definition that accounts for what emotions are and what they are not. Relying on a working definition from psychology, she sees emotion as a "current psychological state of an individual, possessing a distinct quality, intensity, and duration" (78). According to her approach, it should not, however, be ignored that emotions form social practices and that they were in some way inherent in images. Bodily aspects and sociocultural effects of emotions "should lead us to look at the diversity, not at the simplicity, of human emotional display in ancient cultures" (80). She finally underlines the argument put forward by Bonatz that images – although not shown directly – evoke emotions and that they have to be understood in their human cultural and social specificity (81). The study of emotions on the basis of ancient visual art faces a number of obstacles: What triggered a certain emotion in a specific social-historical context? Which emotions are socioculturally relevant ("hypercognized"), and which are irrelevant ("hypocognized")? What ambiguities exist between text and image, and how can we "translate" them? What are the reasons for such a strong social and ideological control over displaying facial (micro-) expressions of basal emotions that are claimed to be universal? How can

we understand culturally shaped body language and its emotional value? And finally, to what extent were emotions stylized or conventionalized in visual art? Wagner-Dunand emphasizes the importance of the study of emotions and their visualizations in ancient cultures. She admits, however, that we are not yet able to understand the ways and mechanisms of emotions and their visualizations in ancient Mesopotamia. Therefore, she claims that special methods should be developed "to gather more and more data as well as to discuss examples and hypotheses that might be tested over the course of time" (91).

The articles by Izak Cornelius, Silvia Schroer and Wolfgang Zwickel focus more generally on gesture, rituals, and customs to express emotions, but also address body parts and facial expressions from a broad spectrum of ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian art.

Wolfgang Zwickel's article (*The Iconography of Emotions in the Ancient Near East and in Ancient Egypt*) is a slightly revised and enlarged version of an earlier published piece.[71] At the beginning Zwickel states that it is "easier to express emotion by language than by iconography" (95).[72] Zwickel therefore focuses especially on the problems of identifying emotion in ancient images. The obstacles can be summarized as follows:[73] 1) Images generally do not show an individual and thus a "real" person, but they depict a stereotype, an ideal face and body. 2) Gestures used to express a specific emotion are different from gestures through which we express the same emotion today. 3) Official representations of kings do not show any emotion but rather are meant to provoke emotions in the beholder. 4) There is only a very limited number of "private" items (e.g. drawings but also cylinder or stamp seals), and even fewer depict emotions. A number of things can explain this, including the small size and the poor quality of those objects. Zwickel then mentions some possible examples that represent emotions such as joy, fear/despair, love/sympathy, among others, and concludes that there are more kinds of emotions in ancient art than one would suspect at first sight. However, their visual rendering through gestures and symbols often seems foreign to us. From those examples Zwickel draws some social- and gender-relevant conclusions, namely that in "official art" (depictions of kings, etc.) no facial expression can be detected, while "private" artefacts (especially animals) sometimes impressively show the ability of ancient artists to express emotions in images. Concerning gender differences, Zwickel stresses that emotions such as joy and mourning are more often connected with women than with men in visual art.

Izak Cornelius (*"The eyes have it and the benign smile" – The Iconography of Emotions in the Ancient Near East: From Gestures to Facial Expressions?*) takes Zwickel's article as a starting point and presents a

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71 See Zwickel 2012.

72 For a critique of this position see Staubli 2015: 253-254.

73 See also Wagner-Durand in this volume.

short overview of the current state of research on history of emotion. He discusses the main problems facing the field, namely definitions, identification, and the application of modern terminology to the ancient world when talking about emotions in the ancient Near East. His second section focuses on gestures expressing joy, mourning, fear/despair and love/sympathy. Cornelius points to some consensus in research that emotions might have been expressed by gestures. In the third section, he approaches the much debated topic of facial expressions. Following the theory of Paul Ekman, he pays special attention to the eyes, the mouth, and the nose of human beings. Stressing that meaning is very often in the eye of the beholder, he cites many examples where emotions were – intentionally or unintentionally – read from renderings of faces. He concludes that there might be tendencies towards the representation of emotions in the visual material of the ancient Near East and, at least in some cases, "there are *some* faces depicting some *sort* of emotion" (142).

Silvia Schroer focuses in her response (*Kulturelle Rollen – keine Gefühle! Eine Response zu Izak Cornelius*) on two aspects. First, she stresses that images showing mourning or dancing people do not represent emotions such as sadness, grief, or joy, but rather deal *conventionally* with emotions and represent their cultural expression. According to Schroer, we cannot talk about the biopsychological dimension of emotions in ancient Near Eastern Art, but only about culturally-shaped customs related to affects. In her second thesis, Schroer states that facial expressions are nonexistent in ancient Near Eastern art („Altorientalische Kunst verzichtet auf die Mimik, so möchte ich hartnäckig behaupten, vollständig" 151). However, the reason for this is not obvious. There is no doubt that artists were able to represent emotions, as depictions of animals show. In contrast to human bodies, the postures of animals were able to communicate something inward to the outside (152-153).[74] Schroer further states that texts and images had different agendas in the ancient Near East.

### *Part II: Comparative Methodology, Linguistics, and Art Historical Analyses – Theoretical Reflections on Visualizing Emotions*

The second part of this volume contains theoretical articles from different disciplines that shed new light on the study of emotion in ancient Near Eastern art.

Florian Lippke (*Analyzing Emotions in Ancient Media: Between Skepticism and Conceptual Autonomy („Eigenbegrifflichkeit")* argues on a more philosophical level for strong scepticism when considering depiction of emotions in general, but at the same time opts for broadening the iconographic dataset in order to gain a deeper understanding of emotionally-characterized

[74] See also Zwickel 2012 and in this volume.

concepts in the ancient world. While there has been a long scholarly discussion on whether or not emotions are depicted in ancient pictorial sources, recent studies opt in a cautious manner to prefer "gestures" and "habitualized actions" as labels for a given image. As a consequence of this argumentation one might assume that no emotions at all were depicted. By challenging this position Lippke achieves more productive results through taking into account non-human attestations in pictorial sources that bear emotionally laden content. However, as a general corrective the model of "*Eigenbegrifflichkeit*" (Benno Landsberger, conventionally rendered in as "conceptual autonomy") is to be introduced into iconographic discourse in order to highlight the difficulties of applying a certain label to attestations in media from distant worlds. Anachronistic fallacies have to be avoided, and this can be achieved by integrating "conceptual autonomy" into methodological approaches.

Based on her earlier studies on emotion in Sumerian and Akkadian languages, Margaret Jaques (*The Discourse on Emotion in Ancient Mesopotamia: A Theoretical Approach*) approaches the topic from a linguistic perspective. She starts with some methodological reflections and stresses the differentiation between an emotion and the (meta-)language used to describe it, as well as the importance of "norms of expression" (188). Generally speaking, Jaques distinguishes two different categories of emotion in Mesopotamian texts: "conventional expressions", which "do not convey real emotions but rather formal appropriate expressions of feelings on specific occasions" and "non-conventional expressions", focusing on a single character in a given narrative context. Emotion can be used as a moral, aesthetic, or legal evaluation of reality or to describe the character of a literary figure (189). The contexts are thus either collective, external and ritualistic, or individual and internal (190). She then discusses different Akkadian and Sumerian terms for emotions, their frequency, semantics, and historical, literary, and social contexts, concluding that understanding emotions always involves the study of communication in a social context (197). Based on the complex network of grammatical, syntactic, and stylistic constructions, she argues for a connection between different concepts of emotions (e.g. "love", "hate", "joy"), although there is no umbrella term for emotions in Sumerian and Akkadian.

Andreas Wagner finally (*Emotionen in Text, Sprache und materialen Bildern: Eine Skizze aus Sicht der Metaphernanalyse*) describes metaphor analyses as an important instrument for reconstructing mentalities ("*Mentalitäten*"). Referring to the history of ideas as described by Hermann Schmitz and Hartmut Böhme, as well as metaphor analyses by Zoltán Kövecses,[75] he demonstrates that the container metaphor plays an important role in the modern western concept of emotions (e.g. EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CON-

[75] See e.g. Kövecses 1999; [3]2007.

TAINER). Andreas Wagner therefore speaks of a "western pattern" (210-212; 216).[76] He further assumes that the same mentalities which can be found in conceptual metaphors influence not only verbal but also visual images. On the bases of some modern images (comic, photorealistic images, paintings etc.) he comes to the conclusion that the emotional concept of the body as a container can also be found in visual representations. In the ancient Near East the relation between the person/body and emotion is different, and similar images are absent. Nevertheless he argues that it is important to include visual images in further research,[77] since they express similar conceptual metaphors and are therefore helpful in exploring cognitive-epistemic structures (217).[78]

The two final papers comment on the rest of the volume by taking up different arguments, reflecting on the nature of the problem, and thinking about future questions, methods, and outcomes.

Karen Sonik (*Emotion and the Ancient Arts: Visualizing, Materializing, and Producing States of Being*) takes the account of Enkidu's death and Gilgamesh's response as the starting point of her reflection, arguing that the

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[76] The concept EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER certainly belongs to the "most typical conceptual metaphors that characterize emotions" (Kövecses $^{2}$2010, 108). For the emotion "anger" Kövecses 2015 stated that the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS PRESSURE IN A CONTAINER "is a near-universal metaphor" (89). The assumption of a "body-based constructionism" (Kövecses $^{3}$2007) is, however, highly debated, and there is no consensus how far this conception of metaphor is based on predominantly universal bodily experience or on relative cultural experience. Geeraerts & Grondelaers (1995, 153-179) assumed that the metaphor concept EMOTION IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER does not derive from bodily experience but is connected to the humoral theory of Galen. Geeraerts (2015, 21) recently claimed that in "the present context, the crucial feature of this story is the necessity of incorporating the history of ideas into the analysis of metaphorical expressions. Regardless of whether the ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER metaphor is exclusively based on the humoural theory or whether it is a combination of the humoural theory and a physiological impulse, a proper understanding of conceptual metaphors implies an awareness of the cultural and scientific traditions that may have influenced the language." For more information about the conceptualization of the body as a container in the ancient Near East, see Kipfer / Schroer 2015.

[77] As an example see e.g. Keel 1984, who uses a slightly different concept of metaphor and does not concentrate only on emotion. See also Strawn 2014: 127: "The suggestion proceeds from the judgment that the iconography of fear demonstrates once again that the artistic evidence is helpful in considering what might be called not simply visual aspects of culture, but *visual thinking* – that is, the making of meaning in non-textual ways and how that impinges on meaning-making in textual ways." For example, the analyses of the metaphor concepts HAPPY IS UP and SAD IS DOWN could be very interesting for further iconographic analyses.

[78] It has long been stated that not only different types of context ("situational context", "discourse context", "conceptual-cognitive context", und "bodily context") play a very important role in the analysis of metaphors (see e.g. Kövecses 2015: 189), but also more generally the modality-independent cognitive structures. Lakoff / Johnson (1999: 57) stress that "not all conceptual metaphors are manifested in the words of language. Some are manifested in grammar, others in gesture, art or ritual". See also Müller 2008 on verbo-gestural metaphors and on verbo-pictorial metaphors.

nascent study of emotion in the ancient Near East "is a fruitful pursuit, with very rich and compelling source material on which to draw" (222). Delving into the substantial corpus of research exploring emotion in the ancient and classical worlds, she suggests three promising directions of enquiry: 1) Comparative study may offer "insight into the numerous theoretical, methodological, and other obstacles that have already been encountered, deliberately or unthinkingly ignored, or successfully navigated in the attempt to delineate emotions – and their materializations – in other foreign cultural contexts" (234). 2) The present volume – according to Karen Sonik – underscores the need to construct detailed, multifaceted, and meticulously explored models of a *comprehensive* system of emotion in ancient Mesopotamia. And 3) with specific respect to future work on images/objects/artworks and emotions, two different areas of research need to be distinguished, namely "the emotional 'content' of artworks" and "the emotions evoked by artworks" (236, a point also emphasized by John Baines).

John Baines (*Epilogue – On Ancient Pictorial Representations of Emotion: Concluding Comments with Examples from Egypt*) reflects on limitations and possibilities in analyzing emotions in pictorial compositions. Discussing some examples in Egyptian art he concludes that indications of emotions can be found in the body and in groupings, rather than in the face (271). Further, he argues that the tension between personal emotion and performance does not apply and that it will not be possible to give a meaningful answer to the question of whether "depicted figures might be understood as experiencing feelings or as only displaying them" (275). It remains important, however, to ask whether feelings are thought of as being present in images. Depictions of emotion are part of the wider presentation of experience and of the ordered cosmos, so that work "on how emotion is represented thus offers one of many ways into interpreting conceptions of world order" (278).

With its broad variety of disciplinary aspects and positions, the present volume both sheds new light on an important topic and offers valuable perspectives for future research.

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# Part 1

# Facial Expression, Gestures and Body Posture: Different Aspects of Visualizing Emotions (Case Studies)

# Porträts altorientalischer Herrscher? Individualität oder Rolle

Othmar KEEL

*Ich habe in den 90er Jahren viel Zeit und Energie in ein geplantes Werk mit dem Arbeitstitel "Die Verwendung altorientalischer Bilder durch die Bibelwissenschaft" investiert. Es sollte drei Hauptteile umfassen: erstens Bilder mit Bezug zur Ereignis- und Personengeschichte, zweitens Bilder mit Bezug zu Institutionen wie z. B. Tempel oder Königtum und drittens Bilder zur Geschichte religiöser Konzepte wie sie in Symbolen und Visionen thematisiert werden. Von diesen Vorarbeiten, Entwürfen und ausgeführten Kapiteln sind schlussendlich nur wenige Teile publiziert worden. 1992 erschien im Anchor Bible Dictionary eine Skizze des ganzen geplanten dreiteiligen Werkes, 1994 ein Beitrag mit einigen Beispielen für die Versuche, schon im 4. Jh. n. Chr. in antiken Bildwerken biblische Gestalten zu entdecken. 1997 zeigte ich in einem Aufsatz, in welchen altägyptischen Bildwerken Bibelwissenschaftler des 19. Jh. Szenen der biblischen Ereignisgeschichte fanden oder zu finden meinten. 1994 publizierten Ch. Uehlinger und ich eine Analyse der Darstellung des israelitischen Königs Jehu auf dem schwarzen Obelisken Salmanassars III. Der hier veröffentlichte Beitrag sollte den ersten Teil des dreiteiligen Werkes abschliessen. Dabei wird die gängige Praxis diskutiert, biblische Werke mit den Köpfen von altorientalischen Herrschern, die in der Bibel genannt werden, zu illustrieren.*

*Ich bin Silvia Schroer und Sara Kipfer sehr dankbar für ihre Initiative, einen weiteren Teil dieses umfangreichen, weitgehend im Manuskriptform verbliebenen Unternehmens der Öffentlichkeit zugänglich zu machen.*[1]

## *1. Einführung: Physiognomik und Porträt*

Als Ausgangspunkt mögen ein paar Sätze von Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) dienen. Sie geben Überzeugungen wieder, die zur Zeit, als die altorientalische und die ägyptische Ikonographie wieder zugänglich wurden, selbstverständlich und Allgemeingut waren und wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen zum Trotz bis heute zu finden sind:

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[1] Dieser Beitrag wird im grossen Ganzen auf dem Stand von 1998 veröffentlicht. Neuere Literatur wurde nur in Ausnahmefällen eingearbeitet.

> „Dass das Äussere das Innere darstellend wiedergebe und das Antlitz das ganze Wesen des Menschen ausspreche und offenbare, ist eine Voraussetzung, deren Apriorität, und mithin Sicherheit, sich kundgibt in der, bei jeder Gelegenheit hervortretenden allgemeinen Begier, einen Menschen, der sich durch irgend etwas, im Guten oder Schlimmen, hervorgethan, oder auch ein ausserordentliches Werk geliefert hat, zu *sehn*, oder, falls Dieses versagt bleibt, wenigstens von Andern zu erfahren, *wie er aussieht*; daher dann einerseits der Zudrang zu den Orten, wo man seine Anwesenheit vermuthet, und andererseits die Bemühungen der Tageblätter, zumal der englischen, ihn minutiös und treffend zu beschreiben, bis bald darauf Maler und Kupferstecher ihn uns anschaulich darstellen und endlich *Daguerre's* Erfindung, eben deswegen so hoch geschätzt, diesem Bedürfniss auf das Vollkommenste entspricht. Ebenfalls prüft, im gemeinen Leben, Jeder Jeden, der ihm vorkommt, physiognomisch und sucht, im Stillen, sein moralisches und intellektuelles Wesen aus seinen Gesichtszügen im voraus zu erkennen. Dem Allen nun könnte nicht so seyn, wenn, wie einige Thoren wähnen, das Aussehen des Menschen nichts zu bedeuten hätte, indem ja die Seele Eines und der Leib das Andere wäre, zu jener sich verhaltend, wie zu ihm selbst sein Rock."[2]

Wie Schopenhauer und andere Zeitgenossen war auch H. A. Layard, der Ausgräber von Nimrud, vom informativen Wert der Physiognomie überzeugt.[3] Johann Caspar Lavater (1741-1801) schien für diese Auffassung eine solide Grundlage geschaffen zu haben.[4] Kritiker Lavaters wie Friedrich Just Riedel (1742-1785), der der Ansicht war, die physiognomischen

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2 Schopenhauer 1977: 689. Ganz so optimistisch, wie die einleitenden Sätze vermuten lassen, bleibt Schopenhauer allerdings nicht, wenn er zum Schluss kommt, dass intellektuelle Fähigkeiten in der Physiognomie leichter erkennbar seien als moralische. Seine kurze Abhandlung schliesst mit dem Satz: „Demnach steht es so, dass wir, physiognomisch urtheilend, uns leicht für einen Menschen dahin verbürgen können, dass er nie ein unsterbliches Werk hervorbringen; aber nicht wohl, dass er nie ein grosses Verbrechen begehn werde" (ebd.: 696).

3 Bei der Beschreibung seiner frühen Abenteuer in Luristan bemerkt A. H. Layard, der Ausgräber von Nimrud, immer wieder, dass er den hinterlistigen, ehrlichen, grausamen etc. Charakter der Leute, die ihm begegneten, sofort auf ihrem Gesicht ablesen konnte (Layard 1887: passim).

4 Die wichtigsten dieser Werke sind: Lavater 1772 und Lavater 1775-1777. Zur mentalitätsgeschichtlichen Stellung Lavaters vgl. Gleitner 1996: 357-385 und Borrmann 1994: 121-131. Gleitner sieht als Hintergrund für das grosse Bedürfnis nach Physiognomik in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. und im frühen 19. Jh. die grossen Migrationsbewegungen, die durch die Industrialisierung ausgelöst wurden, bei denen man sich oft unter Menschen befand, die man nicht kannte, und über die Bescheid zu wissen man ein grosses Bedürfnis hatte (vgl. dazu Anm. 3 zu Layard in Luristan). Gleitner sieht bei Lavater ein ähnliches Bemühen am Werk wie bei Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), der der Unehrlichkeit der Rede, der Praxis, sich nicht zu geben, wie man ist und nicht zu sagen, was man denkt, mittels des Zugriffs auf die (vermeintliche) Evidenz der Körpersprache begegnen wollte. Zum Umfeld Lavaters vgl. weiter: von Arburg 1997: 33-69.

„Gesichtstheorien“ produzierten, was sie zu beobachten vorgeben,[5] und Georg Christoph Lichtenberg (1742-1799), von dem das Diktum stammt: „Wir urteilen stündlich aus dem Gesicht, und irren stündlich“,[6] wurden nicht nur von Schopenhauer als „Thoren“ apostrophiert. Layard fand – dem Bedürfnis der Zeit entsprechend – auf den Lachisch-Reliefs die Physiognomie der Juden in schlagender Weise dargestellt: „The captives were undoubtedly Jews, their physiognomy was strikingly indicated by the sculptures“.[7] Was er damit meinte, ist nicht klar. Meinte er damit die Ähnlichkeit der „Judäer“ von Lachisch mit Juden, die ihm persönlich bekannt waren? Dann wäre die Aussage angesichts der Vielfalt physiognomischer Typen in der weltweit verbreiteten religiös-kulturell bestimmten Grösse „Juden“ grotesk. Glaubte er vielleicht, dass die assyrischen Künstler die „Judäer“ durch physiognomische Charakteristika von anderen Völkern unterschieden hätten, wie die Ägypter Nubier, Libyer, Asiaten und andere Völker[8] als solche charakterisierten? In diesem Falle wäre die Aussage, soweit ich sehe, falsch. Die assyrischen Flachbilder unterschieden die vorderasiatischen Völker von den Philistern im äussersten Südwesten des Reiches bis zu den Leuten aus Gilzanu im Nordosten nicht durch bestimmte physiognomische Züge; einzig die Nubier machen eine Ausnahme.[9] Meinte Layard mit „physiognomy“ vielleicht die ganze Erscheinungsweise inklusive der Tracht, dann hätten wir einen sehr weiten Begriff von „Physiognomie“.[10] Einige Sätze lassen vermuten, dass die Antwort in dieser Richtung zu suchen ist. So wenn er schreibt: „The vanquished people [die Judäer und Judäerinnen] were distinguished from the conquerors by their dress [...]“.[11] Vielleicht verwendete er den Begriff „physiognomisch“ aber auch einfach als Mode-

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5 Riedel 1787: 263.

6 Lichtenberg 1972: 283. Vgl. zu Riedel und Lichtenberg: Gleitner 1996: 357f. und 380. Zu Lichtenberg: Borrmann 1994: 131-134.

7 Layard 1853: 153.

8 Helck 1977: 315-321. Typische Gesichts- und Körpermerkmale, vor allem Haartrachten, werden unterschieden. Deutlichstes Unterscheidungsmerkmal ist aber auch in Ägypten die Kleidung.

9 Vgl. zum Problem der Völkercharakterisierung und zur Identifikation von Nicht-Assyrern auf neuassyrischen Reliefs Wäfler 1975; zu den Darstellungen von Nubiern ebd. 103f. mit Anm. 519 sowie Albenda 1982: 5-23. Onasch 1994 beschränkt sich auf die Texte und geht auf die einschlägigen Reliefs nicht ein.

10 Lavaters Physiognomie beschränkte sich durchaus nicht auf das Gesicht, wenn seine berühmten Schattenrisse, mit denen er seine Traktate illustrierte, in der Regel auch nur dieses zeigen. Grundsätzlich aber hält er fest: „In so fern ich von der Physiognomik als einer Wissenschaft rede – begreif' ich unter Physiognomie alle unmittelbaren Äusserungen des Menschen. Alle Züge, Umrisse, alle passive und active Bewegungen, alle Lagen und Stellungen des menschlichen Körpers: alles wodurch der leidende oder handelnde Mensch unmittelbar bemerkt werden kann, wodurch er seine Person zeigt – ist der Gegenstand der Physiognomik“ (Lavater 1984: 210). Lavater bezieht hier das, was wir Körpersprache nennen, in seine Untersuchungen mit ein. Die Tracht ist aber auch bei dieser weiten Definition nicht einbegriffen.

11 Layard 1853: 149.

wort, das ausdrücken sollte, wie interessant er es fand, den durch die Bibel so berühmt gewordenen Judäern und Judäerinnen auf einem Relief aus der Zeit um 700 v.Chr. zu begegnen, auch wenn er nur aufgrund der Beischrift, die ihm verriet, dass die Stadt Lachisch ist,[12] und aufgrund der Bibel, aus der er erfuhr, dass Lachisch zu Judäa gehörte, wusste, dass es sich bei den Angegriffenen um Angehörige dieses Volkes handelt. Die ganz besondere Bedeutung der Lachisch-Reliefs beruhte für Layard darauf, dass sie die Darstellung eines Königs, einer Stadt und eines Volkes enthalten, mit deren Namen wir dank der heiligen Schrift vertraut sind.[13]

Diese Art von Interesse, das auch Schopenhauer anspricht, dürfte der seit Layard und Wilkinson geübten Praxis zugrunde liegen, in biblischen Werken aller Art immer wieder Darstellungen Ramses' II., Merneptahs, Sargons II., Sanheribs, Darius' und anderer aus der Bibel bekannter oder mit ihren Überlieferungen in Zusammenhang gebrachter Herrscher zu reproduzieren. Eine besonders umfangreiche Galerie dieser Art findet sich in der während der letzten 40 Jahre wahrscheinlich am meisten benützten Bildersammlung zum Alten Testament, in James B. Pritchards „The Ancient Near East in Pictures. Relating to the Old Testament" unter dem Titel „Royalty and Dignitaries" (Chapter V).[14] Sie enthält nicht weniger als 88 Nummern. Im 1969 erschienen Ergänzungsband kommen noch fünf weitere dazu.[15] Das Element „Royalty" könnte dahingehend interpretiert werden, dass es dabei um das „Königtum" geht. Da aber in rund 30 Fällen nur Köpfe, hauptsächlich Statuenköpfe, abgebildet werden, liegt der Akzent nicht auf Funktionen, die der König wahrzunehmen, oder auf Rollen, die er zu spielen hat. Da auch nicht gezielt Haartracht oder Kronentypen illustriert werden, sondern offensichtlich die durch Beischriften gesicherte Identität der Dargestellten die Auswahl bestimmt hat, geht es um Physiognomie. Denn was kann die Darstellung des Gesichts einer Person, mit deren Namen wir vertraut sind und die wir deshalb gerne auch sehen möchten, anderes leisten, als uns mit ihrer Physiognomie bekannt zu machen?

Bevor wir uns der Frage zuwenden, welchen Erkenntnisgewinn eine solche Bekanntschaft bedeutet, müssen wir die Frage beantworten, ob der Alte Orient realistische oder gar naturalistische Porträts kannte, die uns verlässliche Informationen über die Physiognomie der Dargestellten geben.

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12 Layard 1853: 152.

13 Layard 1853: 152: „This highly interesting series of bas-reliefs contained, moreover, an undoubted representation of a king, a city, and a people, with whose names we are acquainted, and of an event described in Holy Writ."

14 Pritchard 1954: No. 376-463.

15 Pritchard 1969: No. 817-821.

## *2. Porträttypen – Altes Ägypten und Mesopotamien*

In seiner wichtigen Studie zum antiken Bildnis umschreibt Ernst Buschor Porträts als „Darstellungen bestimmter Personen, die ein Erdenleben geführt haben, Darstellungen, die bestrebt sind, ihrem Gegenstand eine gewisse Dauer zu verleihen.“[16] Er unterscheidet drei Haupttypen. Den ersten bezeichnet er als „Namungs-“ oder „Daseinsporträt“.[17] Dieses enthält keine individuellen physiognomischen Züge, sondern stellt wie ägyptische Determinative nur die Gattung dar. Mit „Daseinsporträt“ soll die Funktion betont werden. So ist z.B. das berühmte Sitzbild Djosers[18] nicht für Betrachter geschaffen, sondern um dem Toten „Dasein“ zu verleihen, um ihm den Empfang von Opfergaben zu ermöglichen usw. „Namungsporträt“ aber besagt, dass das Bild nur durch die Beschriftung mit einem Namen individualisiert wird. Beide Bezeichnungen sind m.E. nicht besonders glücklich. Beide gehen auf das Bild als solches, darauf, was dargestellt ist, nicht ein. Mir scheint der Ausdruck *Rollenporträt* geeigneter, das Gemeinte zu bezeichnen. Im Falle Djosers geht es zwar darum, einem *bestimmten* Toten einen Leib zur Verfügung zu stellen, einem Individuum Dauer zu verleihen. Das ist die *Funktion* des Bildwerks. Seiner *Art* nach aber stellen dieses und ähnliche Porträts eine *Rolle* dar, „das fast visionäre Bildnis eines Herrschers“,[19] genauer des ägyptischen Königs, charakterisiert durch seine typischen Attribute.

Der König ist auf ägyptischen Tempelreliefs oder assyrischen und persischen Palastreliefs aufgrund seiner Attribute[20] und seiner Stellung in der Komposition jeweils mit Leichtigkeit zu erkennen. Aber ohne Beischrift, Stiluntersuchungen und andere ähnliche Mittel, die mit der individuellen Physiognomie nichts zu tun haben, ist nicht festzustellen, um welches Individuum es sich handelt, ob um Tiglatpileser III. oder Sargon II. Irene Winter charakterisiert diese Art von Porträt im Falle von Herrschern mit Recht als „identification via attributes appropriate to rulership.“[21] Und sie schliesst daraus: „What we have here may not be ‘a portrait of *the* king’ in modern terms; but it is certainly ‘the portrait of a king’. And let there be no confusion: by the beard and attributes, it is ‘the portrait of an *Assyrian* king’.“[22] Winter findet die Bestätigung dieser Interpretation in der assyrischen Bezeichnung eines Bildes dieser Art als *ṣalam šarrūtīya* „Bild meines Königtums“.[23] Schon Hammurapi hatte das Bild an der Spitze seiner

16 Buschor 1960. Vgl. dazu Assmann 1990: 17.
17 Buschor 1960, 36ff.56ff.
18 Lange / Hirmer 1967: Abb. 16-17.
19 Schäfer 1936: 24.
20 Vgl. dazu Moscati 1963: 52-60.
21 Winter 1997: 374.
22 Ebd.: 374.
23 Eba.: 374.

berühmten Rechtssammlung als *ṣalmīya šar mīšarim* „Mein Bild (als) König der Gerechtigkeit“ bezeichnet.[24] Die Rolle „König der Gerechtigkeit“, die er einnahm, nicht seine Individualität sollte gezeigt werden.

Den Gegenpol zum „Rollenporträt“ bildet das realistische oder gar naturalistische Porträt, das Buschor als „Spiegel-“ oder „Modellporträt“ bezeichnet.[25] „Spiegelporträt“, weil es eine Ähnlichkeit zwischen Vorbild und Abbild zum Ziel hat, wie sie der Spiegel liefert; „Modellporträt“, weil es sich nicht an einem vorgegebenen Typus oder an einem Ideal, sondern an einem konkreten Modell orientiert. Wo dessen charakteristische Züge getreu wiedergegeben werden, kann man von einem realistischen, wo auch individuelle Hässlichkeiten wie Runzeln, Warzen, Haarbüschel etc. nachgebildet werden, von einem naturalistischen Porträt reden. Manche möchten überhaupt nur in diesem Falle von Porträt reden, so wenn Claude Vandersleyen definiert: „Von einem ‚Porträt‘ ist dann die Rede, wenn die Darstellung eines menschlichen Wesens genügend genau und charakteristisch ist, so dass jede Person, die das Modell kennt, diese wiedererkennen kann.“[26]

Zwischen diesen beiden Polen des Rollenporträts und des naturalistischen Porträts steht das in vielfältigen Abstufungen realisierte, von Buschor als „Erscheinungs-“ oder „Schauungsporträt“[27] bezeichnete idealisierte Porträt. „Erscheinung“ und „Schau“ betonen die geistigen Komponenten der Ausstrahlung, Wahrnehmung und Begegnung, die ein solches Bild von einer blossen naturalistischen Maske unterscheiden. Gegen die Bezeichnung „idealisierendes Porträt“ hat Tonio Hölscher geltend gemacht, dass „das Ideal die selbstverständliche Grundlage der Menschendarstellung“ war; der Begriff suggeriere, am Anfang hätten naturalistische Porträts gestanden, die dann idealisiert worden seien. In Wirklichkeit hätte – mindestens in Griechenland – das, was hier als „Rollenporträt“ bezeichnet wird, am Anfang gestanden.[28] Man kann den Ausdruck „idealisierendes Porträt“ aber auch auf das Modell statt auf eine andere Porträtart beziehen, was mir ohnehin näher zu liegen scheint, und dann trifft die Kritik Hölschers nicht. Die Gründe, die in Griechenland zwischen 460 und 450 v.Chr. zu realistischen individuellen Porträts geführt hätten, seien politischer und historiographischer Art gewesen: „Die bedeutende Person sollte in ihrer geschichtlichen Einmaligkeit festgehalten werden.“[29] Das suggerierte das neu gewonnene Selbstbewusstsein der Kaufleute und Gewerbetreibenden, die

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24 Ebd.: 366.
25 Buschor 1960: 14ff.128ff.
26 Vandersleyen 1982: 1074.
27 Buschor 1960: 25ff.100ff.
28 Hölscher 1971: l6f. Vgl. auch Gauer 1968: 177. Die Entwicklung geht vom Generellen zum Individuellen und nicht umgekehrt: „We learn to particularize, to articulate, to make distinctions where before there was only an undifferentiated mass“ (Gombrich $^{5}$1977: 86).
29 Hölscher 1971: 21.

„den Realismus als Form der Überwindung der Verunsicherung ihres neuen gesellschaftlichen Status ergreifen, da eben im Realismus die durch ihre neue banausische Lebensweise erworbene Individualität ihren angemessenen Ausdruck findet.“[30] Das entspricht ganz dem, was Jan Assmann beobachtet hat, wenn er feststellt, dass die Kunstwissenschaft das Porträt häufig im Zeichen des Gegensatzes von Individualität und Idealität behandle. Den Gegensatz zu Individualität bilde aber nicht Idealität, sondern Kollektivität, den zu Idealität nicht Individualität, sondern Realismus. Stärker kollektiv geprägte Kulturen bringen idealisierte oder gar Rollenporträts hervor, individuell geprägte realistische Porträts.[31]

Eine andere und ältere Wurzel realistischer Porträts als das wachsende Selbstbewusstsein des Individuums, das im 6. und 5. Jh. auch in Israel festzustellen ist (vgl. Ez 18; Jer 31,29f.), hat man im Totenkult vermutet. In den zu Plastiken umfunktionierten Menschenschädeln des Neolithikums, die zuerst bei den Grabungen von Kathleen Kenyon in Jericho Aufsehen erregt haben, sind beim Bemühen, ein Individuum (zum Nutzen der Gemeinschaft!) über den Tod hinaus zu erhalten, Leichenkonservierung und plastische Nachbildung kombiniert eingesetzt worden.[32] Es dürfte kein Zufall sein, dass zuerst in Ägypten, wo die Leichenkonservierung in der Mumifizierung Spitzenleistungen erzielte, auch Plastiken zu finden sind, die man als realistische Porträts deuten kann. Das hat Jan Assmann weiter ausgeführt. Er hat festgestellt, dass die ägyptische Plastik fast ausnahmslos als Porträtkunst einzustufen ist:

> „Denn gegenüber der in die Zehntausende gehenden Masse der Darstellungen ‚bestimmter Personen‘ treten die Götterbilder, Tier- und Dienerfiguren ins Unbedeutende zurück. Diesen eigentümlichen Befund gilt es sich vorweg in seiner ganzen Besonderheit klar zu machen. Die ägyptische Kunst, darin sehe ich ihre Einzigartigkeit, ist fast durchwegs ‚eponym‘, d.h. jedes Kunstwerk steht in Beziehung zu einem Namen, allerdings nicht dem des Künstlers, sondern dem des Auftraggebers, der auch der Dargestellte ist. Es handelt sich daher, jedenfalls in der Regel, wo nicht um Selbstporträts, dann doch um selbstveranlasste Porträts, die ganz ausgesprochen das Ziel verfolgen, ‚ihrem Gegenstand eine gewisse Dauer zu verleihen‘. Hinter jedem

30 Metzler 1971: 367.

31 Assmann 1990: 17.

32 Zu den Funden von Jericho sowie den später bekannt gewordenen von Tell Ramad (Syrien) und Beisamun (Galiläa) vgl. Kenyon [4]1979, 34-39 mit P1. 20-27. Ausgrabungen in ʿAin Ghazal (Jordanien) haben weitere solche mit Ton bearbeitete Schädel, die hier als Köpfe für grosse Statuen dienten, zutage gefördert; vgl. Rollefson 1984: 185-192; Tubb 1985: 117-143. Für unseren Zusammenhang ist interessant, dass die Ausgräber von ʿAin Ghazal angesichts der Gleichartigkeit der Plastiken das Bedürfnis nach Individualisierung empfanden und den einzelnen Statuen Namen wie Amos, Micha, Fatma, Astarte usw. gaben. Eine kurze Diskussion der Schädel aus Jericho in Bezug auf die Thematik „Repräsentation, Rolle und Individualisierung“ findet sich bei Gombrich [5]1977, 93f.

> selbstveranlassten Porträt steht der Wunsch seines Auftraggebers nach Dauer, nach Todesüberwindung, nach Fortdauer in einem unvergänglichen Medium. Die verschiedenen Formen, in denen dieser je individuelle Wunsch nach Fortdauer seinen Ausdruck findet, fasse ich unter dem Begriff der ‚monumentalen Selbstthematisierung' zusammen."[33]

Die Frage des Porträts in der ägyptischen Kunst ist denn auch mehrmals monographisch behandelt worden,[34] während für Mesopotamien eine solche Untersuchung aus einer wohl richtigen Intuition heraus nie ernsthaft in Angriff genommen worden ist.[35] Der von Eckhard Unger formulierte Satz: „Eine Porträtkunst hat es in Mesopotamien niemals gegeben"[36] ist zwar für das 3. und die erste Hälfte des 2. Jahrtausends v.Chr. gelegentlich bestritten worden,[37] nicht aber für jene Epochen, die uns hier besonders interessieren.

## *3. Darstellung von Gemütsstimmungen*

Vielmehr ist aufgefallen, dass bei neuassyrischen Skulpturen und Reliefs nicht nur Ansätze zur Individualisierung gänzlich fehlen, sondern auch ein anderer Bereich der Physiognomik, nämlich der der Gemütsbewegungen, gänzlich ignoriert wird, obwohl Situationen extremster Schmerzen, so wenn Opfer des assyrischen Imperialismus bei lebendigem Leibe geschunden werden, oder solche sprichwörtlicher Freude, etwa das Beutemachen (vgl. Jes 9,2), geschildert sind.[38] All diese Situationen der Schmerzen und Freuden werden dargestellt, ohne dass ein Widerschein davon auf den Gesichtern derer erscheint, die sie erfahren.[39] Für die Funktion dieser Bildpersonen waren die Gemütsbewegungen, die nach unserem Empfinden von einer individuellen Person fast nicht zu trennen sind, entbehrlich, offenbar so entbehrlich wie das Alter oder die Gemütsstimmung des Königs oder der

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33 Assmann 1990: 17f.

34 Vgl. Schäfer 1936; Vandersleyen 1982: 1074-1080 mit Literaturangaben, denen vor allem Roeder 1925: 33-43; Buschor 1960: bes. 53-85 und Altenmüller / Hornbostel 1982 hinzuzufügen sind. Seither besonders Spanel 1988; Assmann 1990: 17-44; Bolshakov 1990: 89-142; Assmann 1996: 55-81; Bianchi 1997: 34-48. Zur Frage des Realismus bzw. der Ähnlichkeit vgl. besonders Baines 1985: bes. 15-17 und Müller 1988: 1-9.

35 Vgl. Moscati 1963: 64. Buschor 1960 behandelt auf den S. 53-85 zwar die Frage des „Porträts" in der ägyptischen, nicht aber in der mesopotamisch-vorderasiatischen Kunst.

36 Unger 1927: 43; vgl. ebenfalls Unger 1927: 237.

37 Vgl. Opitz 1928-1929: 149 Anm. 1; Moscati 1963: 67f.

38 Vgl. Ussishkin 1982: 84-87. Julia Asher-Greve (1989: 181) macht darauf aufmerksam, dass die Feinde auf den neuassyrischen Reliefs im Gegensatz zu denen auf den vorderasiatischen Monumenten des 3. und 2. Jahrtausends immerhin eine durch Tracht und Besitz (z.B. Kamele) geschaffene Identität haben und nicht mehr als amorphe Masse (nackt) dargestellt werden.

39 Vgl. Andrae 1954-1959: 246f.

Dame bei Schachbrettfiguren.[40] Die Funktion dieser Reliefs war es einerseits, den Taten der assyrischen Könige Dauer zu verleihen (Memorialfunktion) und andererseits, einen gewissen Propagandaeffekt zu erzielen.[41] Den Felsreliefs und Stelen, die als „Hoheitszeichen" besonders an den Grenzen des Reiches geschaffen wurden, wo die Anerkennung der assyrischen Herrschaft nicht gesichert war, kam zudem magische Bedeutung zu.[42] Ein und dasselbe Relief konnte beide oder alle drei Funktionen wahrnehmen. In allen Fällen ging es offensichtlich um das Königtum, um die Rolle, und selbst dem Auftraggeber und Rollenträger war diese offensichtlich wichtiger als seine Individualität und seine Gemütsstimmung geschweige denn die der anderen Beteiligten. Für das 19. Jahrhundert mit seinem Interesse an der Darstellung von Gemütszuständen war das Fehlen jeder Art von Gemütsausdruck allerdings so befremdlich, dass Paul-Émile Botta, der 1843/44 als erster assyrische Reliefs ausgegraben hat[43] und die Kunst dieser Reliefs zu würdigen versuchte, schlicht nicht anders konnte, als in ihnen eine adäquate Darstellung des jeweils zu erwartenden Gemütsausdrucks zu finden. In einem Brief aus Mossul von 2. Juni 1843 schreibt er von einem Relief, das eine Stadteroberung darstellt: „the attitudes of the small figures are perfect, and their heads, scarcely an inch in size, have, in all cases, an appropriate expression." Im Brief vom 24. Juli 1843 steht: „[…] and the heads, still preserved, of some of the conquerors, have an air of satisfied superiority admirably portrayed."[44] Wer angespannt auf etwas wartet, wird es früher oder später sehen. Wenn auf neuassyrischen Reliefs Gemütsstimmungen gesehen werden, dann höchstens, indem man sie aus den Körperhaltungen deduziert, in denen bestimmte Figuren dargestellt sind. In diesem Sinne kann Layard sagen: „The haughty monarch [Sanherib] was receiving the chiefs of the conquered nation [Juda], who crouched and knelt humbly before him."[45] Das *haughty* „übermütig, stolz, überheblich" und *humbly* „bescheiden, demütig" werden nicht durch die Gesichtszüge ausgedrückt, sondern sie werden aus der Haltung herausgelesen.

Was Ägypten betrifft, so ist, um mit der Darstellung von Gemütsstimmungen zu beginnen, das Ergebnis praktisch identisch. Unter den zahlrei-

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40 Vgl. Gombrich $^{5}$1977: 102: „The test of the image is not its lifelikeness but its efficacy within a context of action"; vgl. ebd. 94. Zur Wirksamkeit der Bilder vgl. Freedberg 1989.

41 Gerade von daher scheint mir die Funktion allein bei den assyrischen Reliefs in Bezug auf das Dargestellte bzw. das Nicht-Dargestellte keine restlos befriedigende Erklärung abzugeben. So hätte z.B. der Schmerz der Feinde und die Freude der Sieger Wesentliches zum Propagandaeffekt assyrischer Reliefs beitragen können; obwohl funktional bedeutsam, sind solche Inhalte in diesen Bildern aber nicht dargestellt worden. Es bleibt ein Rest von zur Tradition gewordenem Zufall.

42 Vgl. dazu Uehlinger 1997: 301-315.

43 Fagan 1979: 85-96; Lloyd 1980: 94-100; McGovern / McGovern 1986: 109-113.

44 N.N. Translation of M. Botta's Letters 1850: 49 und Plate XXV.

45 Layard 1853: 150.

chen Darstellungen von Klagefrauen, die Marcelle Werbrouck gesammelt hat, wird die Trauer normalerweise durch stereotype Gesten wie die der Hände vor dem Gesicht, auf dem Kopf u.ä. zum Ausdruck gebracht.[46] Eher selten wird die Trauer durch ein paar Tränen, das Stöhnen und Klagen durch den halb geöffneten Mund angedeutet.[47] Die von Stereotypien (z.B. mandelförmige Augen) geprägte Darstellungsweise verhindert eine konsequente Darstellung des Schmerzes durch den Gesichtsausdruck. Ausschliesslich durch bestimmte Gesten wie z.B. die erhobenen Arme, oder durch Attribute wie z.B. den Lotos, an dem man riecht, aber nie durch Modifikationen der Gesichter wird, soweit ich sehe, in der ägyptischen Kunst die Freude ausgedrückt.

Die Darstellung durch Gesten entspricht der Rollengebundenheit der Trauer (bei den professionellen Klagefrauen) oder der Freude (bei Teilnehmer/innen eines Gastmahls). Diese Rollengebundenheit des Ausdrucks ist auch bei der Königsplastik zu beachten. Hier finden wir allerdings Fälle, wo die Rollenkonformität nicht nur durch die vorgeschriebenen Gesten, sondern durch die Modifikation der Gesichtszüge ausgedrückt wird. Die von uns als sorgenvoll, melancholisch oder energisch gedeuteten Gesichtszüge vieler Königsbildnisse der 12. Dynastie sind nicht individuell – jedenfalls nicht nur individuell – zu verstehen, denn die Gaufürsten und hohen Beamten derselben Dynastie schauen ebenso „sorgenvoll", „ernst" und „energisch" in die Welt wie die Herrscher dieser Periode.[48] Schon lange hat man die „Stimmung" dieser Gesichter mit der „Lehre König Amenemhets I."[49] in Beziehung gebracht,[50] in der der einsame König völlig desillusioniert von der Schlechtigkeit und Undankbarkeit der Menschen spricht und ständige Wachsamkeit fordert. Jan Assmann macht im Anschluss an Heinrich Schäfer[51] darauf aufmerksam, dass dieser Text nicht allein steht, sondern einer Gattung angehört, zu der etwa auch die „Lehre für Merikare", die „Klagen des Oasenbewohners", das „Gespräch eines Mannes mit seinem Ba", die „Mahnworte des Ipuwer" und weitere Werke zu rechnen sind:[52]

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46 Werbrouck 1938: passim.

47 Werbrouck 1938: Fig. 33.36.70. Vgl. auch Mekhitarian 1954: 115.122.128.130.144. Leider belegen Dieter Wildung und Sylvia Schoske (1984: 184) die generelle Aussage nicht: „Frauendarstellungen sind es, in denen der ägyptische Künstler Emotionen sichtbar macht, bei den Trauernden, den Tanzenden, den Liebenden". Es kann sich aber im Hinblick auf die genannten Emotionen nur um ihre Darstellung durch stereotype Gesten handeln und nicht um Veränderungen im Gesichtsausdruck, also um Physiognomie im weitesten Sinn.

48 Ein grosser Teil des Materials findet sich bei Evers 1929. Vgl. auch Wildung 1984; Habachi 1985.

49 Helck 1969; Blumenthal 1984: 85-107 und Blumenthal 1985: 104-115.

50 Wilson 1951: 132.

51 Schäfer $^{4}$1963: 29f.

52 Lichtheim 1973: 139-192.

> „Diese Texte versuchen, einen neuen Begriff von Weisheit zu formulieren und zu füllen, im Sinne eines Wissens, das sich nicht nur auf die positive kosmo-sozio-politische Ordnung der Dinge bezieht, sondern darüber hinaus um ihre grundsätzliche Gefährdetheit weiss; eines Wissens, das seine eigene Begrenztheit sowie die grundsätzliche Offenheit der letzten Fragen in den Blick bekommen hat. […] Die Bildnisse der Beamten bekennen sich zu derselben Weisheit und Weltsicht, wie sie in den Altersbildnissen Sesostris' III. ihren explizitesten, gültigsten und daher modellhaften Ausdruck gefunden hat. Die Altersbildnisse dieses Königs spielen in der Kunst dieselbe Rolle, wie die Lehre Amenemhets I. in der Literatur: sie wirken als Ausgangspunkt einer Reihe sich an ihnen orientierender Werke."[53]

Verschiedene Zeiten haben verschiedene Idealvorstellungen gepflegt. Im Neuen Reich wich das Ideal der Sorge und der Energie weitgehend dem einer strahlenden jugendlichen Schönheit.[54]

## *4. Realistische Porträts in Ägypten?*

In Ägypten finden wir, wenn wir von den Königs- und Beamtenporträts des Mittleren Reiches absehen, ebenso wenig Gemütsstimmungen ausgedrückt wie in Vorderasien. Aber auch bei jenen handelt es sich – genau genommen – ja weniger um Darstellungen einer Gemütsstimmung, die als solche in der Regel dem Wechsel unterworfen ist, als um solche einer Lebenshaltung. Hingegen scheinen wir es in Ägypten immer wieder nicht nur mit Rollenporträts, die in Vorderasien die Norm sind, sondern mit idealisierenden und teilweise sogar mit realistischen Porträts zu tun zu haben. Allerdings ist es gar nicht so einfach, wenn wir die Person nicht gekannt haben und uns weder eine Totenmaske noch Fotos zur Verfügung stehen, festzustellen, ob ein bestimmtes Porträt als realistisches zu verstehen ist.

Der Einfluss gesellschaftlicher Konventionen bleibt nicht bei den Gemütsregungen (ernst, lächelnd, natürlich) stehen. Er reicht noch weiter. Im

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53 Assmann 1990: 29.

54 Das lässt sich auch in unserer Kultur beobachten. Beim Blättern in den Fotoalben einer Familie, die einen längeren Zeitraum abdecken, kann man sehen, dass es vor dem Krieg üblich war, sich auf Fotos ernst zu geben. Im arabisch-palästinischen Raum liess man sich noch lange nach dem Krieg nur mit ernstem und strengem Gesicht fotografieren, auch wenn man unmittelbar vor der Aufnahme noch ausgelassen gescherzt hatte. „On a picture you have to look strong!", erklärte mir ein Palästinenser. Bei uns wurde es nach dem Krieg unter amerikanischem Einfluss üblich, auf Fotos lächelnd zu erscheinen. Heute hat man sich natürlich, ungezwungen zu geben, weder speziell freundlich noch speziell ernst. Über individuelle Freundlichkeit, Strenge oder Natürlichkeit sagen solche Bilder nichts aus. Biographisches ist ihnen nicht zu entnehmen. Zur kulturellen Geprägtheit nicht nur der zur Schau getragenen Gemütsstimmung, sondern auch der Physiognomie im engeren Sinne vgl. die interessanten Ausführungen von Borrmann 1994: 212f.

Mittleren Reich kann man feststellen, dass der Einfluss der Königs- auf die Beamtenplastik nicht nur den Ausdruck, sondern auch die Gestaltung der Augen und des Mundes mitbeeinflusst. Wenn in Amarna nicht nur der König, die Königin und ihre Töchter, sondern auch zahlreiche Beamte mit einem weit ausladenden Hinterkopf dargestellt werden,[55] dann mag dieser Zug vielleicht den König charakterisiert haben, aber bei den Höflingen kann er kaum realistisch gemeint sein. Es ist in diesem Zusammenhang die banale Tatsache zu bedenken, dass starke Backenknochen, melancholische Mundwinkel, ein vorspringendes Kinn, eine Adlernase etc.[56] nur mässig stichhaltige Beweise dafür sind, in einem bestimmten Kopf ein realistisches Porträt zu sehen. Erstens können diese Züge, wie gesagt, auf eine einflussreiche Person (den König) oder ein berühmtes normativ gewordenes Bild einer solchen Person zurückgehen. Zweitens ist nicht zu übersehen, dass ein einigermassen sorgfältig gearbeiteter Kopf ganz einfach bestimmte Züge haben muss. Es gibt z.B. nur beschränkte Möglichkeiten, einen Hals zu gestalten. Auch ohne bestimmte normative Vorbilder können künstlerische Konventionen entstehen, den Hals oder die Augen so und nicht anders zu machen. Wo aber bei einer in Bezug auf Zeit, Raum und Funktion sehr kohärenten Gruppe wie den sogenannten Ersatzköpfen der 4. Dynastie aus Giza ganz verschiedene Typen belegt sind, geht man mit Recht davon aus, dass diese Verschiedenheit dem Realismus dieser Porträts zugute zu halten ist. „Ohne jeden Zweifel kam es dem ägyptischen Künstler darauf an, besser gesagt war es sein Auftrag, die individuellen physiognomischen Züge des Grabherrn abzubilden, um ihnen im Medium des Steins Dauer zu verleihen.“[57]

In der Königsplastik der 4. Dynastie scheinen realistische und idealisierende Porträts nebeneinander zu stehen. „Zwar finden sich auch hier sehr realistische Bildnisse, besonders von Mykerinos, dessen individuelle Eigenheiten – ein viel zu kleiner Kopf, stark unter dem Oberlid vortretende Augen, der Mund mit schmaler Ober- und schwerer Unterlippe sowie die sich nach unten verbreitende Kopfform – auf seiner Bostoner Statue geradezu schonungslos wiedergegeben sind.“[58] Bei anderen Königsbildnissen der 4. Dynastie, besonders bei Chefren aber auch bei weiteren Statuen Mykerinos’ ist der Realismus zugunsten einer Idealisierung gemildert. Stärker als individuelle realistische Züge treten da die Majestät des Königtums in Erscheinung.[59] Vor allem gegen Ende des Mittleren Reiches finden wir dann wieder realistische Porträts, die sich diesmal aber mit dem Willen verbinden, expressiv eine Lebenshaltung zum Ausdruck zu bringen, die um die

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55 Vgl. beispielsweise Davies 1903: Pl. 6.14.23.30 usw.
56 Vgl. Moscati 1963: 61-64; Vandersleyen 1982: l077f.
57 Assmann 1990: 20. Zusätzlich zu den bei Assmann abgebildeten Beispielen vgl. Junker 1941: 113-121; Smith 1946: Pl. 6-10.14-15; Assmann 1996: 55-81.
58 Assmann 1990: 22 und Abb. 8. Vgl. Smith 1946: Pl. 13b.
59 Lange / Hirmer 1967: Abb. 30-33.139-142.

Schwierigkeiten und die Anstrengungen weiss, die damit verbunden sind, eine menschenwürdige Ordnung zu gestalten und aufrecht zu erhalten.

Die Königsplastik des Neuen Reiches ist, ausser in der Amarnazeit, in der 18. wie in der 19. Dynastie stark vom Willen geprägt, ein jugendlich zeitloses Königsbild zu präsentieren. Mit diesem Bestreben verbindet sich bald mehr, bald weniger der Wunsch nach individuellen Zügen. Besonders ausgeprägt scheint letzterer bei Amenophis III. gewesen zu sein.[60] Im Gegensatz zu früheren Perioden scheint sich in der 18.-20. Dynastie eine einmalige Kontrollmöglichkeit anzubieten, individuelle Züge in der Königsplastik zu verifizieren. Von einer ganzen Reihe von Herrschern dieser Periode haben wir leidlich erhaltene Mumien zur Verfügung.[61] Der Vergleich von Mumien und Bildwerken führt allerdings nur zu sehr partiellen Ergebnissen, weil der Schädel die Gesichtsform nur in beschränktem Umfang determiniert und bei Mumien die Weichteile oft zerdrückt sind und vom Kopf oft nicht viel mehr als der Schädel erhalten ist.[62] Dazu kommt, dass eventuelle Porträts einen anderen, z.B. jugendlicheren Zustand festhalten können als die Mumie. Dennoch ergibt sich z.B. bei Thutmosis III. und bei Sethos I. eine ganz leidliche Übereinstimmung zwischen Porträts einer- und Mumie andererseits.[63] In den Porträts der 25., der nubischen, Dynastie, wirken Einflüsse der alterslosen Königsdarstellungen der 4. und 5. Dynastie und der Tradition der Nubierdarstellungen zusammen.[64] Die 26. Dynastie zieht das Idealbild des jugendlich oder zeitlosen lächelnden Herrschers dem realistischen Porträt vor. Das Interesse ägyptischer Künstler bzw. ihrer Auftraggeberinnen und Auftraggeber an realistischen Zügen ist aber auch in der Folgezeit immer wieder neu zu beobachten.

Ein interessantes Beispiel bietet Darius I. Seine Darstellungen im persischen Stammland sind der vorderasiatischen Tradition entsprechend reine Rollenporträts. Das gilt auch für die frühen Darstellungen dieses Perserkönigs, der gleichzeitig der zweite Herrscher der 27. ägyptischen Dynastie war, am Amun-Tempel von Hibis. Aus den letzten Jahren seiner Herrschaft, nachdem er Ägypten besucht hatte, finden sich aber am selben Tempel zwei Darstellungen, die als realistische Porträts gewertet werden können (Abb. 1; nur dieses ist einigermassen intakt erhalten).[65] Auch sonst finden sich in der Perser- und der Ptolemäerzeit Rollen- bzw. idealisierende neben realistischen Porträts.[66]

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60 Müller 1988: 31-45; zu prächtigen Farbaufnahmen der Skulpturen dieses Herrschers vgl. Delange 1993.

61 Partridge 1994.

62 Schäfer 1936: 13; Harrison 1966: 95-119, bes. 113-116.

63 Spanel 1988: 2 Fig. 1-4.

64 Russmann 1974: 11-24, bes. 23f.

65 Gropp 1990: 45-49 und 56-60. Abb. 15 auf S. 60 ist unsere Abb. 1. Die Zeichnung bietet leider nur einen Ausschnitt, genau den, den das Foto bietet, das der Zeichnung zugrunde liegt.

66 Bothmer / Riefstahl 1960; Kyrieleis 1975.

Als Hinweis auf das Vorhandensein realistischer Porträts in Ägypten ist ergänzend zu den Produkten der bildenden Kunst zuerst von Hellmut Brunner auf einen Passus im Sonnenhymnus des Tja-nefer[67] hingewiesen worden. Der Passus lautet:

> „Du hast alles Seiende gebaut als Werk deiner Hände,
> du bist es, der ihre Gestalten erschaffen hat,
> indem jedes einzelne (*w'nb*) ihrer Gesichter unterschieden ist von seinem Nächsten (*ṯnw r sn.nw.f*).
> Denn du hast differenzierte Gesichter erschaffen (*jw qmȝnk ḥrw ḏsrw*).“[68]

Das Nebeneinander von Rollen- und realistischen Porträts von Darius I. illustriert einen Sachverhalt, der für die ganze Zeit altägyptischer Geschichte gelten dürfte. Man hatte zu keiner Zeit Bedenken, neben mehr oder weniger stark individualisierenden, realistischen auch idealisierende und sogar reine Rollenporträts zu verwenden. Eine ganze Reihe handfester Daten belegen das:

– Der König konnte im Bildtyp des Sphinx ohne weiteres anstelle seines menschlichen Körpers einen Löwenleib annehmen.[69]
– Bei manchen Herrscherdarstellungen lässt sich nachweisen, dass sie Werke von Vorgängern ganz genau kopieren liessen. Manchmal hat es sich dabei um einzelne Statuen gehandelt, wie bei Amenophis I., der für seinen Totentempel Statuen Mentuhoteps II. kopieren liess.[70] Manchmal betraf das ganze Szenen, wie im berühmten Fall des libyschen Häuptlings,[71] der angesichts seiner Frau Chutjotes und seiner Söhne Usa und Uni von Pharao Sahure (5. Dyn., um 2500 v.Chr.) bzw. von Unas (Ende der 5. Dyn., um 2360 v.Chr.), von Pepi I. bzw. Pepi II. (6. Dyn., zwischen 2300 und 2150 v.Chr.)[72] und von Pharao Taharqa (25. Dyn., 690-664 v.Chr.)[73] erschlagen wird. Hätten wir nur einen Beleg für diese Szene, würden wir sie für individuell, realistisch und historisch nehmen. Da es unsinnig ist anzunehmen, jeder libysche Fürst von der Zeit Sahures bis zu der Taharqas (d.h. über knapp 2000 Jahre hinweg) hätte eine Frau gehabt, die Chutjotes hiess und zwei Söhne, von denen der eine Usa und der andere Uni hiess, können wir diese Bilder nicht einfach als Darstellungen eines historischen Ereignisses verstehen. Zweifellos besiegte irgend einmal in der Geschichte Ägyptens ein König einen libyschen Fürsten und erschlug ihn in Gegenwart seiner Frau und seiner Söhne.

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67 Theben Grab Nr. 158; wahrscheinlich Zeit Ramses' III.
68 Brunner 1984: 278.
69 Vgl. Coche-Zivie 1984: 1139-1147; Schweitzer 1948; Hassan 1951; Dessenne 1957; Demisch 1977.
70 Wildung 1984, 17-20. Vgl. dazu auch Myśliwiec 1985: 151f. und Schoske 1985: 214f.
71 Wilson 1956: 439-442.
72 Leclant 1980: 49-54 und Pl. II.
73 Macadam 1955: 63-65 und Pl. IXa-b und XLIX.

Diese Tat wurde dann ein Teil der (möglichen) Rollen des Königs, und in der Folge fühlten sich immer wieder einmal ein ägyptischer Pharao verpflichtet, denselben Sieg mit allen seinen Details zu vergegenwärtigen, als ob er selbst ihn errungen hätte, „Geschichte als Fest“,[74] Geschichte als im Bild inszeniertes Mysterienspiel.

– Die Pharaonen haben nicht nur Bildwerke ihrer Vorgänger kopieren lassen. Manche Könige (und Beamte) haben Statuen und weniger häufig Reliefs ihrer Vorgänger ganz einfach übernommen, den Namen, der ursprünglich dastand, weggemeisselt und ihren eigenen an dessen Stelle gesetzt.[75] So hat z.B. Ramses II. massenweise Statuen aus Memphis und aus Totentempeln des Mittleren Reiches in die von ihm erbauten Deltastädte bringen, die ursprünglichen Namen wegmeisseln und durch seine eigenen ersetzen lassen.[76] Gelegentlich wurden die Gesichtszüge, aber auch andere Details etwas modifiziert und den herrschenden Gepflogenheiten (nicht unbedingt der Physiognomie des Herrschers!) angepasst.[77]

Angesichts dieser und ähnlicher Tatsachen neigen manche Forscher und Forscherinnen zur Ansicht: „Die ägyptische Kunst hat zu keiner Zeit, auch nicht in der Ära Echnatons, veristische oder realistische Zeugnisse hervorgebracht.“[78] Wir sind gewohnt, alle nicht eindeutig ornamentalen oder abstrakten Bilder anzuschauen, „als ob sie Photographien oder Illustrationen wären, und sie als Widerschein einer tatsächlichen oder imaginären Wirklichkeit zu sehen.“[79] Wir neigen dazu, Bilder aus der Vergangenheit als historische Bilder zu betrachten. Aber als solche lassen sich altorientalische Bilder nur sehr beschränkt verstehen, jedenfalls dann, wenn wir Geschichte als Ereignisgeschichte, als Historie verstehen, die durch Personen- und Ortsnamen, durch Individuen und Daten gekennzeichnet ist. Unser Bedürfnis nach historischem Wissen in diesem Sinne, unser Bedürfnis, zu wissen, wie es wirklich war, lässt uns laufend vergessen, dass der Alte Orient – das alte Ägypten miteingeschlossen – stärker an Rollen und der Darstellung von Rollen interessiert war als an der der Akteure, die sie spielten.

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74 Vgl. Hornung 1966.
75 Helck 1986: 905f.
76 Vgl. Eaton-Krauss 1984: 110; Kitchen 1982: 120f.177f.
77 Vgl. Spallanzani 1964: 27-45.
78 Schlögl 1986: 89; vgl. auch Buschor 1960: 53f. Bei letzterem besteht allerdings der Verdacht, er habe das realistische Porträt in Ägypten seinem evolutionistischen Konzept, das Porträt sei „Zug um Zug durch Untergliederung des Allgemeinbildes“ entstanden, geopfert. Assmann 1990: 20 Anm. 17.
79 Gombrich $^{5}$1977: 105. Vgl. auch Frankfort-Groenewegen 1972: passim.

## *5. Porträts in der Bibel genannter Herrscher*

In dem schon genannten Abschnitt „Royalty and Dignitairies“ in James B. Pritchards „The Ancient Near East in Pictures. Relating to the Old Testament“[80] sehen manche Seiten aus, als ob sie zu einer modernen Enzyklopädie mit Fotos historischer Persönlichkeiten gehören würden. Da fehlt kaum einer der Herrscher, die in der Geschichte Israels eine Rolle gespielt haben sollen oder in der Bibel namentlich erwähnt werden. Da ist der Kopf Echnatons (No. 412), der als erster Vertreter eines radikalen Monotheismus gilt. Da sind die „Porträts“ Ramses’ II. (No. 420), welcher oft als Pharao der Unterdrückung identifiziert wurde, und Merneptahs, des Pharaos der „Israel-Stele“ (No. 423), in dessen Regierungszeit man den Auszug aus Ägypten angesetzt hat. Da sind die Köpfe Tiglatpilesers III. (No. 445; vgl. 2Kön 15,l9.29; 2Kön 16,7.10) und Sargons II. (No. 446), die das Nordreich Israel vernichtet haben. Da ist das „Porträt“ des glücklosen Gegenspielers der Assyrer, des Pharaos Taharqa (No. 424; vgl. 2Kön 19,9) usw.

Diese Porträtgalerie, in einem seriösen Werk eingerichtet, suggeriert allein durch die Zusammenstellung und den Ausschnitt (Kopf, Gesicht), dass wir es hier mit realistischen Darstellungen historischer Persönlichkeiten zu tun hätten. Eine Legende wie die zu No. 419 kann aber aufmerksame Leserinnen und Leser stutzig machen: „Statue of Tut-ankh-Amon usurped by Hor-em-heb“. Das klingt wie „Foto von John F. Kennedy, hier für Richard Nixon verwendet“.

Expliziter und deutlicher als in Pritchards Handbuch wird der Bezug zwischen diesen Porträts, die zum Teil reine Rollenporträts sind, und der biblischen Geschichte in weniger anspruchsvollen Werken hergestellt. So finden sich die „Porträts“ Ramses’ II., Merneptahs, Tiglatpilesers III., Sargons II. und Taharqas auch in Werner Kellers „Und die Bibel hat doch recht. In Bildern“.[81] Ein Kommentar wie: „Grimmig und voll unbändigen Willens, so hat ein assyrischer Künstler Tiglatpileser III. porträtiert“ oder „Das war Sargon II., der Eroberer der Hauptstadt des Nordreiches Israel, dessen Porträt uns mit diesem Kalksteinrelief über mehr als zweieinhalb Jahrtausende erhalten blieb“[82] suggerieren, dass wir eine Art Fotos vor uns hätten. Dabei sind sich alle Kenner und Kennerinnen darin einig, dass es kaum etwas Schematischeres gibt als die Darstellungen neuassyrischer Herrscher.

Das Bild *eines* altorientalischen Herrschers, der in der Bibel eine ganz prominente Rolle spielt, fehlt allerdings in dieser Galerie: dasjenige

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80 Pritchard 1954: No. 376.463.

81 Keller 1963: 83.l29.222.227.247. Zu diesem erfolgreichsten biblischen Sachbuch des 20. Jh. vgl. Keel 1997: 51 mit Anm. 3f. Eine fast identische Galerie wie bei Werner Keller ist schon bei Riehm $^{2}$1894: I 56-58; II 1391.1693.1699, und bei anderen Autoren des 19. und 20. Jh.s zu finden.

82 Keller 1963: 222 und 227.

Nebukadnezzars, des Zerstörers des ersten Tempels. In älteren Werken, die in der 2. Hälfte des 19. oder zu Beginn des 20. Jh. entstanden sind, wurde unter dem Stichwort „Nebukadnezzar“ häufig eine kreisrunde Kamee (geschnittener Halbedelstein mit erhabenem Relief) abgebildet (Abb. 2).[83] Die Kamee trägt eine dem Rand entlang laufende neubabylonische Inschrift:

> *ana* $^{d}$AMAR.UTU (Marduk) UMUN(bēlī)-šú
> $^{d}$AG-NIG.DU-ŠEŠ (*Nabû-kudurri-uṣur*) LUGAL (*šar*) TIN.TIR$^{ki}$ (*Bābili*)
> *ana* TIN(*balāṭī*)-*šú* BA(*iqīš*)
> „Dem Marduk, seinem Herrn, hat Nebukadnezzar, der König von Babylon, (dies) für sein Leben geschenkt.“[84]

Das Zentrum der Kamee nimmt ein nach links gerichteter, behelmter Kopf ein. In dem 1908 erschienenen 4. Band des „Dictionnaire de la Bible“ wird die Kamee zum Stichwort „Nabuchodonosor“ abgebildet. Der Text sagt: „Eine Kamee des Berliner Museums stellt ihn uns bartlos vor, mit einem sehr feinen Profil, mit einer Physiognomie ohne Härte, mit einem Helm auf dem Kopf, (der) verschieden (ist) von dem der ninevitischen Monarchen, deren Porträts wir besitzen.“ Es folgt die Transkription und Übersetzung der Legende. Abschliessend wird bemerkt: „Leider ist die Arbeit eher griechisch als babylonisch, und wenn die Kamee echt ist, dann frägt man sich, ob sie nicht einen Fürsten des gleichen Namens, aber aus einer jüngeren Zeit, darstellt.“[85]

1908 hätte man es besser wissen können. Es gab damals bereits eine breite Literatur zu dieser Kamee, in der eindeutig festgestellt worden war, dass es sich ursprünglich um ein Votivauge (aus Onyx)[86] gehandelt hat, das Nebukadnezzar in einen Tempel gestiftet hatte. Das Votivauge entspricht einem vielfach belegten Typus.[87] Sein bildloses Zentrum wurde erst nachträglich in der Renaissance mit dem behelmten Kopf versehen,[88] der also mit Nebukadnezzar nichts zu tun hat.[89]

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83 Vgl. z.B. Riehm $^{2}$1894: 1082; Ball 1899: 206; Jeremias $^{3}$1916: 539 Abb. 247 mit Anm. 2.

84 Langdon 1912: 202f. Nr. 38a. Vgl. Borger 1967: 283; Berger 1973: 150-158.

85 Pannier 1908: 1443 Fig. 391: „Un camée du musée de Berlin nous le représente imberbe, d’un profil très fin, d’une physiognomie sans dureté, coiffé d’un casque, fort différent des monarques ninivites dont nous avons les portraits [...]. Malheureusement le travail est grec plutôt que babylonien, et si le camée est authentique, on se demande s’il ne représente pas quelque prince de même nom, mais d’époque plus récente.“

86 Milchig und dunkelbraun bis schwarz gestreifter Achat (Quarz).

87 Vgl. Furtwängler 1913: 140-142; Langdon 1912: 42f.; Sollberger 1954 : 237-240.

88 Furtwängler 1913: 140f.

89 Einige Verwirrung hatte der Umstand verursacht, dass neben dem Original aus Onyx schon im 18. Jh. eine Kopie aus dunkler Glaspaste bekannt war. Das Original befand sich vor 1760 im Besitz eines gewissen Priors Vaini in Rom; von dort kam es über den Grossherzog der Toskana nach Florenz, wo es vom Konservator der Sammlung, Magliavini, unter der Nr. 2919 inventarisiert worden war. Die Kopie wurde 1760 von Johann

## *6. Was verrät uns die individuelle Physiognomie?*

Die altorientalischen Bildwerke gewähren uns bei den neuassyrischen Königen keinen Zugang zur Physiognomie einzelner Herrscher. Sie bieten uns kein Bild individueller Persönlichkeiten, sondern ein Bild der Rolle. Bei den ägyptischen Pharaonen dürften uns in einzelnen Fällen einzelne individuelle Züge überliefert sein. Da wir aber stets auch mit idealisierenden und konventionellen Zügen rechnen müssen, haben wir nur einen gebrochenen und unsicheren Zugang zu individuellen Physiognomien. Was wäre der Gewinn eines individuellen Porträts? Zwar geistert immer noch die Lavater'sche Vorstellung herum, das sei bedeutsam, „weil das Aussehen eines Menschen seine Persönlichkeit" widerspiegle.[90] Die neuere Experimentalpsychologie ist da mehr als skeptisch und liegt weitgehend auf der Linie der Lavater-Kritiker Riedel und Lichtenberg.[91] Eine kritische Betrachtung der Situation ergibt etwa folgendes Bild:[92] Die antiken Physiognomiker, Lavater[93] und Carl Gustav Carus (1789-1869)[94] haben den Körper als Ganzes als Symbol eines geistigen Prinzips verstehen wollen. Aber H. G. Fischer[95], Gerhard Kloos[96] und andere haben darauf aufmerksam gemacht, dass die genannten Autoren in der praktischen Durchführung ihrem theoretisch ganzheitlichen Ansatz nicht gerecht wurden, sondern weitgehend wie jene vorgingen, die körperliche Merkmale als Symptome, als Zeichen für unsichtbare psychische Eigenschaften auffassen und sie dann mosaikhaft zu einem Charakterbild zusammensetzen. So wurde z.B. aus der Umfangsentwicklung bestimmter Körperregionen – etwa Kopf, Brust, Bauch – sowie den sichtbaren Erhebungen und Vertiefungen, z.B. am Schädel, auf den entsprechenden Entwicklungsgrad der darunter liegenden Organe – Gehirn, Atmung, Verdauung – und Hirnareale geschlossen. In einem zweiten Deutungsschritt wurden den Organen nach einer vorgefassten Meinung Eigenschaften zugeordnet, die meist aus den physiologischen Funktionen der Organsysteme deduziert wurden. In einem dritten Schritt wurden dann die äusseren Zeichen, z.B. hohe Stirn, mit dem dahinter verborgenen Hirnteil, dem z.B. Verstand und ethisches Urteil zugeordnet worden sind, in Bezie-

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Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768) in seiner „Description des pierres gravées du feu Baron Stosch dédiée à son Eminence Monseigneur le Cardinal Alexandre Albani par M. l'Abbé Winckelmann Bibliothécaire de son Eminence" (Florenz 1760), 28 Nr. 126 beschrieben. 1765 kaufte Friedrich der Grosse die Sammlung Stosch, und so kam die Glaspastenkopie nach Berlin. Vgl. zur Geschichte Menant 1885: 79-86; Menant 1888: 142; zur Inschrift Schrader 1880: 293-298.

90 Müller 1988: 40.

91 Siehe oben Anm. 5 und 6.

92 Ich folge hier weitestgehend Lüdemann 1980.

93 Siehe oben Anm. 4.

94 Zu Carus vgl. Borrmann 1994: 151-155.

95 Fischer 1934.

96 Kloos 1951.

hung gesetzt. Ein sehr verbreitetes populärwissenschaftliches Buch dieser Art ist Amandus Kupfer „Grundlagen der praktischen Menschenkenntnis nach Carl Huters Psycho-Physiognomik“.[97] Auf wissenschaftlicher Ebene fand noch am ehesten das Modell der biologischen Totaltypen Aufnahme, vor allem das der Konstitutionstypen, vertreten etwa von Ernst Kretschmer „Körperbau und Charakter. Untersuchungen zum Konstitutionsproblem und zur Lehre von den Temperamenten“.[98] Aber selbst hier ergaben experimentelle Nachprüfungen einen insignifikanten Prozentsatz der Übereinstimmung zwischen Körperbau und Temperament. Jene Modelle, die gar einzelne Erscheinungselemente wie Nasenformen u.ä. zu deuten beanspruchten, haben sich bei experimentellen Nachprüfungen überhaupt nicht bewährt. Die populäre und weitherum praktisch geübte Deutung der Physiognomie hat also keinerlei zuverlässige Basis. Vielmehr hat sich in der Wissenschaft Schopenhauers Meinung durchgesetzt, es bestehe kein verlässlicher Zusammenhang zwischen Erscheinung (Physiognomie) und Wesen (Charakter) eines Menschen.[99] Heute schenkt die Psychologie ihre Aufmerksamkeit deshalb eher der Eindrucksanalyse und dem Problem der Urteilsbildung. Wichtig ist ihr, Strategien aufzudecken, nach denen sich Urteilsbildung vollzieht, und Regeln für die Eindrucksverwertung zu finden. So gesehen wird Physiognomik zu einem Thema der Sozialpsychologie, nämlich der Personwahrnehmung. Der Mensch ist nicht gläsern, der Körper nicht durchsichtig auf Charakter und Intelligenz. Zahlreiche Experimente haben gezeigt, dass es nicht möglich ist, sich vor eine Schulklasse oder eine Geschäftsbelegschaft hinzustellen und aufgrund des blossen Anschauens zu sagen, wer intelligent ist oder wer welchen Charakter hat. Es ist so, wie der eingangs zitierte Riedel sagte: Die physiognomischen „Gesichtstheorien“ produzieren, was sie zu beobachten vorgeben.

Bleibt die Frage, warum jemand in bestimmten Körpereigentümlichkeiten bestimmte Eigenschaften ausgedrückt sieht. In einem sehr interessanten Essay zeigt Norbert Borrmann über diese experimentellen Ergebnisse hinaus auf, dass Physiognomik in einer Kulturphase, in der die Zeitwahrnehmung die Raumwahrnehmung überrundet und sich das wissenschaftliche und künstlerische Interesse vom Bild weg der abstrakten Formel zugewandt hat, jede Ausdruckswissenschaft, jede Gestaltpsychologie heute im Abseits operiert.[100] Wir sind oder scheinen mindestens Lichtjahre vom mittelalterlichen und antiken „*omnis mundi creatura sicut liber et pictura*“ entfernt zu sein. Die Welt ist uns kein Bild einer höheren Ordnung mehr, sondern ein System von Energien, von denen gilt, sie in den Griff zu bekommen. Nicht mehr die Schau, sondern die Bewirtschaftung der Welt nimmt alle Aufmerksamkeit in Anspruch.

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97 Kupfer [26]1976.
98 Kretschmer [22]1955.
99 Vgl. besonders Frijda 1965: 351-421.
100 Borrmann 1994: 210.

Trotz dieses doppelt negativen Ergebnisses (wir haben in Vorderasien keine und in Ägypten nur in beschränktem Masse realistische physiognomische Züge, und aus diesen Zügen kann nicht auf bestimmte Persönlichkeitseigenheiten geschlossen werden) bleibt das von Schopenhauer in dem eingangs angeführten Zitat ausgedrückte Bedürfnis bestehen, berühmte und berüchtigte Menschen zu sehen. Dieses Bedürfnis besteht für viele Menschen auch im Hinblick auf die in der Bibel genannten Grössen. Ebensowenig wie durch eine Verdrängung der Sexualität die Sexualität aufgehoben wird, kann das Leugnen physiognomischer Annahmen den Physiognomen in uns töten. Jeder physiognomiert, und jeder *wertet*, indem er oder sie physiognomiert. Selbstverständlich resultieren diese Bewertungen nicht immer aus objektiven Bemühungen, sondern häufig aus subjektiven Neigungen und Interessen, weshalb der Physiognomik auch, unabhängig vom Grad der Wissenschaftlichkeit, den man ihr zuspricht, moralische Ablehnung, Ängste, Ressentiments entgegentreten. Die Physiognomik enthält zweifelsohne Atavistisches. Lavater irrte, als er sie zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und sogar der *Menschenliebe* empfahl.

Auch wenn der Körper wenig oder nichts, jedenfalls nichts objektiv Fass- und „naturgesetzlich“ Beschreibbares über sein Innenleben preisgibt, er hat seinen eigenen Wert, seine eigene Bedeutung. Der Körper ist ein wesentlicher Teil des Menschen, und wenn ein unbedarftes geistiges Leben in einem prachtvollen Körper oder ein reiches geistiges Leben in einem ausdruckslosen oder verkrüppelten Körper sich abspielt, so ist auch das interessant und berechtigtes Objekt menschlichen Wissensdranges. Die grossen Nachschlagewerke (bis zu Wikipedia) kommen diesem bleibenden Interesse entgegen, indem sie nach Möglichkeit alle bedeutenden Persönlichkeiten auch abbilden, sei es mit Hilfe einer Plastik, eines Kupferstichs oder eines Fotos. Die Betrachter und Betrachterinnen solcher Bilder begnügen sich meistens damit festzustellen: So hat der, so hat die also ausgesehen! Oder: So hätte ich mir den oder die nicht vorgestellt! Häufig wird auch emotional reagiert. Der oder die wird als sympathisch oder unsympathisch wahrgenommen.[101] Wenn der intuitiv gewonnene Eindruck argumentativ erhärtet wird, dann meist mit Hilfe von Daten, die aus der Biographie des oder der Beurteilten gewonnen sind. Bestimmte Einzelzüge des Porträts werden dann aufgrund derselben als Ausdruck von Sinnlichkeit, Willenskraft, Grausamkeit usw. interpretiert. Aber eine solche Betrachtungsweise ist – wie gesagt – bei den meisten altorientalischen Porträts nicht nur insofern verfehlt, als ihr die moderne Experimentalpsychologie jeden objektiven Wert abspricht, sondern auch insofern, als dem Alten Orient im Allgemeinen eine Porträtkunst im engeren, realistischen Sinne unbekannt war und sie höchstens in Ägypten sporadisch gepflegt worden sein mag.

[101] Kaum jemand verliebt sich aufgrund der Stimme. Normalerweise führt eine visuelle Begegnung in diesen emotional, aber häufig nicht nur emotional, sondern auch von korrekten Intuitionen in den Charakter des oder der Erwählten geprägten Zustand.

Dennoch ist die Verwendung altorientalischer Herrscherdarstellungen nicht sinnlos. Über die (nicht berücksichtigte) individuelle Physiognomie hinaus zeigt uns ein Porträt, ob ein Rollen-, ein idealisiertes oder ein realistisches Porträt, wie sich eine bestimmte Person inszeniert hat bzw. inszeniert wurde. Das sagt durchaus etwas über diese Person aus. Die Bilder sollten nur nicht willkürlich auf das Gesicht beschränkt werden, sondern uns das Bild so vorführen, wie es vom Auftraggeber bestellt wurde. Dann nämlich haben wir ein Bild Ramses' II. oder Sanheribs, wie er sich selber sah oder wenigstens sehen wollte und wie er sich seiner Umgebung, seinen Höflingen und Untertanen präsentieren liess und wie diese ihn wahrzunehmen hatten. Damit haben wir in den allermeisten Fällen zwar keinen Zugang zu individuellen Persönlichkeiten und zur Ereignisgeschichte im engeren Sinne. Aber wir haben einen Zugang zur Rolle, die sie spielten und in den Augen ihrer Umwelt wohl auch zu spielen hatten und auch spielen wollten. Irene Winter hat gezeigt, wie sich assyrische Herrscher analog zu den Texten, in denen sie sich als Richter und Priester, als Jagd- und Kriegshelden präsentieren, auch auf den Reliefs in diesen Rollen haben darstellen lassen.[102] Wir gewinnen einen Zugang zum Faktum, dass den Trägern und Trägerinnen dieser Rollen und ihren Zuschauern und Zuschauerinnen die Rollen wichtiger waren als die Personen, die sie spielten. Kritik verdient – und das sei hier nochmals unterstrichen – einzig die übliche Praxis der Sachbücher zur Bibel, dass häufig nur der Kopf dieser altorientalischen Selbstdarstellungen gezeigt[103] und der Körper weggelassen wird. Damit verstümmelt man in vielen Fällen die Selbstaussage jener Bilder.

Indem man Körperhaltung und Inszenierung weglässt, frustriert man eine heutige Wahrnehmungsweise, denn „Akzeptanz findet unser (bzw. der) Körper als Mitteiler von Informationen in der Gegenwart vorrangig in der Bewegung. Nicht der Körper selbst als raumhaftes Gebilde soll gewertet werden, sondern nur seine Gebärdensprache [...]".[104]

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[102] Winter 1997: 360-362.
[103] Das ist leider auch bei unserer Abb. l der Fall.
[104] Borrmann 1994: 212. Vgl. Fehr 1979; Magen 1986; Dominicus 1994.

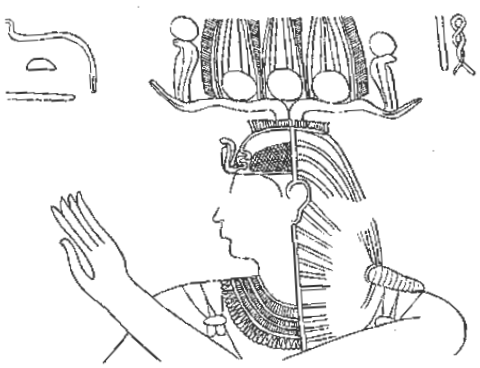

Abb. 1. Ein Porträt des Königs Darius I. im Hibis-Tempel, Ägypten.
Zeichnung Hildi Keel-Leu. Vgl. Gropp 1990: 60, Abb. 15.

Abb. 2. Kreisrunde Kamee. Vgl. z.B. Riehm [2]1894: 1082. Ball 1899: 206;
Jeremias [3]1916: 539 Abb. 247 mit Anm. 2.

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# Der stumme Schrei – Kritische Überlegungen zu Emotionen als Untersuchungsfeld der altorientalischen Bildwissenschaft

Dominik BONATZ

## *Teil I*

*Die schlechteste Sachlage ist, wenn Wissenschaft anfängt, sich mit Kunst zu betreffen. (Paul Klee)*

Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts entwickelte und prägte der Autodidakt Carl Huter (1861-1912) seine Lehre der Psycho-Physiognomik und Kallisophie (ethische Schönheitslehre). In Anlehnung an Johann Caspar Lavaters (1741-1801) Theorie der Physiognomik propagierte Huter die Psycho-Physiognomik als die primäre Wissenschaft, denn seiner Auffassung nach ist alles reale Erkennen zunächst an das Äußere der Dinge gebunden, so dass niemand unmittelbar in das Innere schauen kann, sondern stets auf das Äußere angewiesen ist.

Für die Emotionsforschung birgt diese Lehrauffassung Huters einen wichtigen Ansatz, welcher sich mit der Sichtbarkeit und Lesbarkeit von Emotionen befasst: das Äußere als Spiegel und Ausdruck innerer Gefühle.

In Huters Lehre – nach seinem frühen Tod weitergeführt und zusammengefasst von Amandus Kupfer (1879-1952, s. Kupfer 1963; 1964) – bildet das Empfinden die oberste Weltenergie, aus der alle Kraft hervorgegangen ist. Aus Empfinden entsteht das Sehnen, Wünschen und Wollen, das Bewusstsein. Der Wille wurzelt also im Empfinden.

Das Empfinden steuert das Naturell des Menschen und dieses Naturell lässt sich gemäß Huter durch vergleichende Beobachtung der Gesichts-, Kopf-, und Körperform wie auch der Mimik, Gestik und Verhaltensweisen von Personen herauslesen. Huters physiognomische Körperkonstitutionslehre umfasst eine ganze Reihe von menschlichen, aber auch tierischen und pflanzlichen Naturellen, so das harmonische Naturell, das disharmonische Naturell, das Ernährungsnaturell, das Bewegungsnaturell und das Empfindungsnaturell, wobei es zu Vermischungen zwischen diesen Grundnaturellen und Unternaturellen (wie dem Verbrecher- und Mephistonaturell als Unternaturell des disharmonischen Naturells) kommen kann.

Mit frappierender Eindeutigkeit identifiziert Huter seine Menschennaturelle auch in der antiken Porträtkunst, wobei seine Nähe zu Winkelmann unverkennbar ist. Beispielhaft hierfür ist die Beschreibung einer Porträt-

Statue des jugendlichen Kaiser Nero, die Amandus Kupfer in seinem Buch über die Lehre Huters zur Beschreibung des disharmonischen Naturells heranzieht: „Dem Körperbau des disharmonischen Naturells fehlt die edle Schönheit und Ausgeglichenheit und natürliche Elastizität der Formen. […] Man betrachte nur den versteiften Hals, der die erbliche Belastung verrät, ferner das hammerartige Kinn, das unschöne Gesicht, den niederen und breiten Schädel, das häßliche Ohr, das ochsenfellartige Haar – in allem liegt schwerste Disharmonie und Entartung, man könnte fast glauben, die Karikatur einer menschlichen Gestalt vor sich zu haben“ (Kupfer 1963: 72).

Unzweifelhaft sind die Bildwissenschaften – auch die archäologischen – in der Beschreibung und Deutung porträthafter Bildnisse andere Wege gegangen, haben sie laut Ingrid Weigel (2012: 6) ihr Interesse auf „Ansichten vom Gesicht jenseits der ausgetretenen Pfade der Physiognomie“ erweitert. Wissenschaftsgeschichte sind daher ebenso früh in der deutschen Vorderasiatischen Archäologie und Assyriologie vertretene Behauptungen, dass sich Volkszugehörigkeiten aus den physiognomischen Merkmalen mesopotamischer Rundplastik herauslesen lassen und demnach Sumerer eine „kurzhalsige Nation mit fleischigen Nasen“ darstellten und Semiten an ihrer „hohen Stirn und semitischen Nase“ erkennbar seien (Meissner 1915: 24, 39).

Trotz berechtigter Kritik bleibt die Physiognomik Bestandteil von Studien zur antiken Körpergeschichte (z.B. Winter 1996 [2010]; Thommen 2007; Vogel 2009; Nunn 2011), und auch Huters Psycho-Physiognomik hat den Weg in die Gegenwart gefunden. Die Methode hat heute zahlreiche Anhänger, das in Zürich angesiedelte Carl-Huter-Institut bildet in der Tradition der Huterschen Hochschule unterschiedliche Interessenten in der Psychophysiognomik aus und wirbt um deren weltweite Anerkennung als natürliches Selbstfindungsverfahren.

Ich möchte daher kurz bei Huter verweilen und seine Studien zum menschlichen Gesicht, genauer dem Untergesicht, zum Anlass nehmen, um daran einen kritischen Vergleich zu den uns überlieferten altorientalischen (insbes. assyrischen) Gesichtsartefakten anzustellen. Unter Gesicht verstehe ich dabei nicht nur das lebendige Gesicht, vielmehr auch die Maske, die ein Gesicht von sich produziert. Diese Differenzierung ist relevant für jedwede Bildbetrachtung, denn insbesondere im Bild, also dem was wir gemeinhin als ein Porträt bezeichnen, entsteht zwangsläufig eine Maske, hinter der das „echte“ Gesicht zurücktritt (Belting 2014: 29).

Amandus Kupfer stellt bei Huters Psycho-Physiognomie des Untergesichts folgende Merkmale heraus (vgl. Abb. 1):

> „Aus der Art der Gefühle (Mundregion) und aus der Art des Tatlebens (Kinn und Unterkiefer) ergibt sich die Einstellung eines Menschen gegenüber der Mitwelt, also sein nach außen gerichtetes Benehmen. Dieses kommt an der von Huter bezeichneten feinen Einbuchtung zwischen Unterlippe und Kinn zum Ausdruck. Ist die Wölbung unter der Unterlippe schön

> und geschwungen, so ist der Mensch ein Freund von edler Lebensart und gutem Benehmen. Wölbt sich aber diese Partie hart und unschön, so ist das Gegenteil der Fall.
>
> Aus der Art der Gefühle (Mund) und dem Charakter (Nase) ergibt sich die Art der Einschätzung und Einstellung der eigenen Persönlichkeit, also Bescheidenheit, Aufmerksamkeit, gütige Neigung und die entgegengesetzten Eigenschaften: Egoismus, Selbstgefallen, Unaufmerksamkeit, Härte, Grausamkeit." (Kupfer 1963: 63-64)

Da es sich dem Naturellschema von Huter/Kupfer zufolge um eine universale Beobachtung handelt, müsste sich eine an diesem Schema angelehnte praktische Übung im Erkennen der im Untergesicht wirkenden Kräfte zum Beispiel auch auf assyrische Bildwerke übertragen lassen. Bei der Gegenüberstellung mit der Untergesichtspartie eines bartlosen assyrischen Hofbeamten (Abb. 2) träten demnach eindeutig positiv wirkende Kräfte zutage, nämlich „edle sinnliche Triebe und aristokratische Lebensart", worüber es bei Huter/Kupfer ferner heißt: „dieses Untergesicht hat ein feines Gewebe, den schön geformten Unterkiefer und weichgeschwungene Lippen; man erkennt daran, dass die Geisteskraft Helioda und das damit sympathisierende, feinplastische Formen hervorrufende Od überwiegt. Der Mann mit dieser Bildung des unteren Gesichts ist ritterlich im allgemeinen und in der Liebe gegen das weibliche Geschlecht. Er tut einem Weib nie absichtlich Böses und vergilt ihm selbst Böses mit Gutem und Heroismus" (Kupfer 1963: 63-64).

Nun ist der zum Vergleich herangezogene Kopf aus der Zeit Assurnasirpals II. (883-858 v. Chr.) kein Einzelstück, unzählige assyrische Gesichter, vollplastisch oder im Relief, könnten uns weitere Auskünfte über die „assyrische Wesensart" geben. Allein dass diese in der Mehrzahl bärtige Gesichter sind, die ausdrucksstarke Kinnpartie also durch ein „höfisches" Attribut kaschiert wird. Nichtsdestoweniger, die feinplastischen Formung des Gesichts und die feingeschwungenen Lippen müssten bei all diesen Bildnissen für die gleiche edle Wesensart sprechen. Zieht man noch die gleichbleibend große und tendenziell geradlinige Nase hinzu, käme man zu einem weiteren positiven Urteil. Sie zeugt nach Huter/Kupfer von Verstand, Willens- und Tatkraft. „Je feiner und edler die Entwicklung, je schöner und edler bildet sich die Nase, – hier liegt das Geheimnis der Schönheit", schreibt Kupfer (1963: 115) und liefert damit unwillentlich ein Plädoyer für die Rehabilitierung der gemeinhin als brutal und aggressiv verschrienen Assyrer.

Allerdings liegt es diesem Beitrag fern, eine Neubewertung assyrischer Selbstrepräsentation vorzunehmen. Die gewollt problematische Analogie zu Huters Psycho-Physiognomie verschafft mir vielmehr die Gelegenheit, auf die Gefahren hinzuweisen, die zwangsläufig entstehen, wenn Raster zur Ergründung antiker Körpersprache angesetzt werden, die erstens nicht bildwissenschaftlich fundiert sind (auch wenn sie wie im Fall der Physiognomie visuell orientiert sind), zweitens aus einer eurozentrischen Körper- und Bildauffassung resultieren und drittens nicht den eigentlichen Bildbe-

stand und seinen zeitgenössischen Kontext als Ausgangspunkt der Argumentation wählen.

So lohnt es sich, noch einmal auf die Darstellung assyrischer Gesichter zu fokussieren. Hierfür liefert das Naturellschema Huters aufgrund seiner starken Formalisierung ein praktisches Vergleichsinstrument, um aufzuzeigen, dass es in der Physiognomie dieser Gesichter keine Abweichungen gibt. Sie sind eindeutig stereotyp und unterliegen gestalterischen Konventionen, die es schlichtweg ausschließen, dass darin menschliche Charaktereigenschaften und Emotionen zum Ausdruck gebracht wurden (vgl. Nunn 2011: 126, 134). Der Beweis hierfür ist einfach: Die Gesichter der dargestellten Figuren ändern sich über Zeit und Raum nicht, sie behalten in allen unterschiedlichen Handlungszusammenhängen ihren gleichen, formal vereinheitlichten Ausdruck (Abb. 3). Es finden sich darin keine Gefühlsregungen wie Freude, Zorn, Hass, Schmerz, Trauer oder Melancholie. Damit ist nicht gesagt, dass sie ausdruckslos seien. Ihnen eignet im Gegenteil ein sehr strenger Ausdruck, der im Betrachter zwar unterschiedlich starke Emotionen hervorzurufen vermag, aus der Sicht des Dargestellten aber ein gleichbleibendes Merkmal des assyrischen Stils ist. Frontal betrachtet sind zum Beispiel die Gesichter eines assyrischen Königs und eines Lamassu, dem apotropäischen Türwächter neuassyrischer Paläste, völlig identisch (vgl. Abb. 4 und 5). Augenscheinlich handelt es sich dabei um eine intendierte stilistische Ähnlichkeit, durch die die Nähe des Herrschers zu seiner übernatürlichen Schutzmacht zum Ausdruck gebracht wird, genauso wie sich in der Darstellung des Gottes in der geflügelten Sonnenscheibe (Abb. 6) die gleiche abbildhafte Beziehung offenbart. Nicht physiognomische Merkmale unterscheiden die verschiedenen Charaktere, sondern zeichenhafte Elemente wie Kleidung, Frisur, Attribute und Gesten (vgl. Winter 1984).

Ob bei der Begegnung zwischen Herrschern und Untergebenen und Unterworfenen, in den vielfältigen Schlacht- und Gewaltszenen, bei den Siegesfeiern und Triumphszenen, bei den Statuen und Stelen, die den Herrschern vor den Symbolen seiner Götter zeigen – das Gesicht bleibt regungslos, obwohl hier Situationen geschildert werden, die starke Emotionen hervorgerufen haben müssen. Sie sind jedoch kein intendierter Gegenstand des bildnerischen Schaffens, genauso wenig wie die von Huter angesprochenen grundsätzlichen und durch unterschiedliche Lebensläufe geprägten Eigenschaften der Persönlichkeit eines Menschen bildlich thematisiert worden wären. Selbst hinter der vordergründigen Porträthaftigkeit assyrischer Herrscherdarstellungen steht nicht der Gedanke einer individuellen Persönlichkeit, sondern ein Konzept der Repräsentation von Königtum und Herrschaft und göttlicher Ebenbildlichkeit (vgl. Winter 1997 [2010]; 2009).

Assyrische Bildkunst ist allem voran Repräsentationskunst (Bonatz und Heinz, im Druck), was auch zu großen Teilen auf andere Gebiete und urbane Epochen altorientalischer Bildkunst zutrifft. Wir müssen daher den In-

tentionen der zeitgenössischen Bildauftraggebern Beachtung schenken, um zu verstehen, dass im Rahmen der ikonographischen Konventionen die Physiognomie von Gesichtern niemals die Darstellung von Emotionen gegolten hat. Huters Methodik mag zwar einen Referenzrahmen für die psychologisierende Sicht auf die Physiognomie von zeitgenössischen Individuen liefern, als Instrument der bildwissenschaftlichen Betrachtung und der an Bildern interessierten Emotionsforschung taugt sie aber für das Altertum nicht. Sollten wir damit den Anspruch, Emotionen in der Ikonographie des Alten Orients zu erforschen, grundsätzlich ad acta legen oder gibt es andere Möglichkeiten, sich diesem Forschungsgebiet über bildliche Quellen zu nähern?

## *Teil II*

*Kunst gibt nicht das Sichtbare wieder, sondern macht sichtbar. (Paul Klee)*

Zweifellos bieten uns Gebärden als ein wichtiges Element der non-verbalen Kommunikation eine Möglichkeit, über die intendierte Sinnhaftigkeit emotionaler Ausdrücke in der altorientalischen Ikonographie zu reflektieren. So liefert der im Übergang von der Späten Bronze- zur Eisenzeit entstandene Ahiram-Sarkophag aus der Nekropole von Byblos ein beredtes Zeugnis dafür, dass die Darstellung von Emotionen Teil eines komplexen ikonographischen Programms sein kann. Im Rahmen einer Totenfeier erscheinen jeweils vier Frauen an den Schmalseiten des Sarkophags und stimmen mit eindeutigen Gesten zur Klage über den verstorbenen Herrscher im Hauptbild an der Seitenwand an: Zwei von ihnen schlagen sich mit den Händen an den Kopf, die anderen beiden fassen sich unter die Brust (Rehm 2004: 49-51, Taf. 7, Abb. 8-10). Wir erkennen darin ein sehr expressives Bild starker emotionaler Trauer, das kulturell geprägt ist und seit der Antike bis in die Gegenwart von den Bildmedien aufgegriffen wird.

Der Ahiram-Sarkophag ist jedoch trotz seiner ikonographischen Parallelen zur Sepulkralkunst in Ägypten, in der Ägäis und im syrischen Raum ein singuläres Monument. Um einen für unser Vorhaben ausreichenden Bildbestand vor Augen zu haben, ist es daher erneut angebracht, auf das große ikonographische Repertoire assyrischer Bilder zurückzugreifen. Das historisch-narrative Element der Darstellung und deren Einbettung in anschauliche Raum- und Zeitkonzepte ermöglichen dem Betrachter, damals wie heute, ein leichtes Wiedererkennen der hier geschilderten Ereignisse. Zur Unterstützung der Eindeutigkeit der Bildbotschaft verhilft eine differenzierte Gebärdensprache (Bonatz 2002: 146). Was und wieviel davon dem Bereich emotionaler Gestik zugeschrieben werden kann, sei hier kurz zusammengefasst.

Die im Corpus assyrischer Reliefarbeiten sichtbarste Geste emotionaler Gefühlsregung knüpft an die Darstellung auf dem Ahiram-Sarkophag an,

wenngleich ihr thematischer Hintergrund sich davon deutlich unterscheidet. In den Eroberungs- und Deportationsszenen der Reliefs Assurnasirpals II. (883-858 v. Chr.), also dem ältesten bildzyklischen Narrativ in einem neuassyrischen Palast, sind es vorweg Frauen der unterlegenen Seite, die sich angesichts des drohenden Unheils in einer vieldeutigen Gebärde der Verzweiflung mit einer oder mit beiden Händen an den Kopf greifen (Abb. 7-8). Vieldeutig heißt, dass hierin Gefühle von Schrecken und Angst, Trauer und Hoffnungslosigkeit zum Ausdruck gebracht sein können. Dies ist vor dem Hintergrund des geschilderten Ereignisses, das für die Betroffenen ein unmittelbares Grauen und den folgerichtigen Verlust von Freiheit, Sicherheit und womöglich dem eigenen Leben bedeutet, naheliegend und nachvollziehbar. Es ist das Tatsachenhafte, was in den assyrischen Bildern zur Sprache kommt. Nur bleibt zu überdenken, ob der Darstellung der Frauen in dieser Gebärde eine Intention zugrunde liegt, die vorrangig dem Erlebnis der Betroffenen Beachtung schenkt. Wenn eingangs bemerkt wurde, dass die assyrische Bildkunst Repräsentationskunst ist, so muss man bei der Einarbeitung dieses Details in ein assyrisches Bildnarrativ in erster Linie an die Intention der Bildauftraggeber denken. Was stellen die Frauen in ihrer Gebärde der Verzweiflung aus Sicht des Autors, nämlich des assyrischen Königs und der durch ihn verkörperten Staats- und unschlagbaren Siegermacht, wirklich dar? Dies ist die wesentliche Frage, um nach den Ursachen für die Darstellung von Emotionen auf diesem Gebiet altorientalischer Bildkunst zu forschen. Bevor ich jedoch diesen zentralen Punkt vertiefe, lohnt es sich, einen Blick auf ähnliche Darstellungen und deren Entwicklung bis ans Ende der neuassyrischen Zeit zu werfen.

Nicht alleine Frauen verraten ihre Angst durch eine Gebärde der Hilflosigkeit, auch Männer, die sich ergeben oder auf der Flucht sind, erheben häufig eine Hand schützend oder abwehrend vor den Kopf (Abb. 9). Auf einem Relief Tiglatpilesers III. (744-727 v. Chr.) findet sich dann bei einer Gruppe von Männern, die auf den Türmen stehend der Eroberung ihrer Stadt tatenlos entgegensehen, ein Repertoire an Gesten, das auch das Sich-an-den-Kopf-Greifen beinhaltet (Abb. 10). Zwei dieser Männer und ein dritter, den ein Assyrer zu enthaupten im Begriff ist, erheben „flehentlich“ beide Hände. Die Gruppe verbildlicht, genauso wie die Frauen, Hilflosigkeit und Verzweiflung, womit der Aspekt der Repräsentation an Deutlichkeit gewinnt. Bezeichnend an dieser Szene ist zudem ihre Einbettung in eine Sequenz von Ereignissen: das Einbrechen der Mauern der Stadt durch schwere Kriegsmaschinerie, das Gemetzel unter den bereits ihrer Kleider beraubten Feinde der Assyrer am Fuße der Stadt und ihre Pfählung vor den Stadtmauern. Die einzigen Gegner, die in diesem Zerstörungschaos noch am Leben und demnach fähig zu emotionalen Gesten sind, sind die drei Männer auf den Stadttürmen. Sie repräsentieren als lebendige Zeugen die Unterlegenheit und Machtlosigkeit der Besiegten.

Auch bei Sargon II. (721-705 v. Chr.) erscheinen Männer in gleicher Weise auf den Türmen einer eroberten Stadt, nur dass hier beide die Arme

in die Lüfte strecken, als wollten sie damit ihrer besonderen Hilflosigkeit Ausdruck verleihen (Botta und Flandin 1849-50: Taf. 64). Mit Sanherib (704-681 v. Chr.) jedoch ändert sich die thematische Konzeption an dieser Stelle des Bildnarratives. Die Männer auf den Türmen der eroberten Stadt Lachisch sind als aktive Verteidiger dargestellt, sie schießen mit Bogen und werfen mit Steinen auf ihre Angreifer, ohne diese allerdings zu treffen (Barnett, Bleibtreu und Turner 1998: Taf. 334, Abb. 430c). Gleiches findet sich auf allen anderen der von diesem Herrscher ins Bild gesetzten Stadteroberungen, weshalb vermutet werden darf, dass dem Bild der noch wehrhaften Verteidiger der Vorzug gegeben wurde, um die Stärke der Gegner anstelle ihrer Schwäche zu demonstrieren und somit die militärische Leistung der Assyrer zu unterstreichen.

Bei Assurbanipal (668-631 v. Chr.) tritt dann unter den Stadtverteidigern erneut die Gebärde der Hilflosigkeit mit den hochgereckten Armen in Erscheinung. Sie erscheint analog zu Darstellungen in der Schlacht, worin fliehende Feinde mit rückgewandtem Körper beide Hände flehentlich von sich strecken (Barnett, Bleibtreu und Turner 1998: Taf. 289, Abb. 381b). Darin lässt sich auch ein zeitliches Moment erkennen, der Augenblick der völligen Selbstaufgabe.

Das semantische Feld der an diesen Beispielen aufgezeigten Emotionen reicht von panischen Reaktionen wie Angst, Verzweiflung, Schmerz bis hin zu Gefühlen der Ohnmacht, Hilflosigkeit und Schutzlosigkeit. Sie sind im Kontext der dargestellten Handlungen unausweichliches Moment der psychischen Erfahrung und mit den Zeichen der Gebärdensprache auch effektvoll ins Bild gesetzt. Dennoch, der Auftrag dieser Bilder ist nicht, menschliche Emotionen in extremen Lebenssituationen zu schildern. Wenn es darum ginge, wäre das Spektrum der möglichen Emotionen in der weitgefächerten Thematik assyrischer Bilder weitaus größer, als es die Darstellungen tatsächlich wiedergeben. Stattdessen wirkt ein Großteil der Bilder ausgesprochen emotionslos, auch wenn ihre Handlung auf starke emotionale Situationen verweist. Deshalb ist anzunehmen, dass Emotionen nur dann verbildlicht wurden, wenn sie der Repräsentation der assyrischen Macht dienten. Bezeichnenderweise werden wir nicht fündig, wenn wir nach starken emotionalen Gebärden auf Seiten der Assyrer Ausschau halten. Allein die unterlegenen Gegner zeigen Emotionen. Sie werden dargestellt, weil sie in der Semiotik assyrischer Bilder ein Zeichen für die Schwäche der Anderen spiegelbildlich zur Stärke der Assyrer sind. In diesem Zusammenhang sind die assyrischen Kriegsreliefs Paradebeispiele einer maskierten Wirklichkeit, die eindeutige Parallelen zur modernen Bildpropaganda aufweist.

Es sind nicht viele altorientalische Beispiele, die sich zu diesem Thema finden lassen, und die hier angeführten stellen wohl die wenigen eindeutig für uns erkennbaren dar. Dennoch denke ich, dass es aufschlussreich sein kann, hierüber weiter zu forschen, eben aus dem Grund der Ursache für die Darstellung von Emotionen im Kontext repräsentativer Bildkunst. Wann

wurden sie dargestellt und warum? Anstelle eines weiteren Fazits möchte ich daher diesen Aufsatz mit einem Ausblick auf das Thema abschließen.

## *Teil III*

*Die Art und Weise, in der die menschliche Sinneswahrnehmung sich organisiert – das Medium, in dem sie erfolgt – ist nicht nur natürlich, sondern auch geschichtlich bedingt. (Walter Benjamin)*

Was im Rahmen dieses bildgeschichtlichen Diskurses bislang nicht berücksichtigt wurde, für die ikonographische Analyse jedoch unerlässlich ist, sind die schriftlichen Quellen, die ob explizit oder implizit mit den Bildzeugnissen in Verbindung stehen. Die Intermedialität von Bild und Text stellt insbesondere für den assyrischen Bereich ein hermeneutisches Kernproblem dar. Beide Medien sind auf vielfältige Weise inhaltlich und formal miteinander verbunden, ob auf beschrifteten Bildmonumenten oder durch den indirekten Bild-Text-Bezug, wobei ihre Funktionen jedoch sehr unterschiedlich sein können und Homologien in der visuellen und textlichen Botschaft nicht automatisch gegeben sind (z.B. Russell 1999). Aus bildhermeneutischer Sicht stellt sich häufig die Frage, inwieweit Darstellungsmomente und -aspekte durch schriftliche Zeugnisse erklärt oder überhaupt erst erkennbar gemacht werden. Hierunter fällt auch die Möglichkeit, nach Ausdrücken für Emotionen in den Texten zu forschen und diese in Relation zu den bildlichen Zeugnissen kritisch zu erfassen.

Einen Ansatz hierfür bietet der Reliefzyklus Assurbanipals, der den Feldzug gegen den elamischen Feind Teumman und seine babylonisch-chaldäischen Alliierten behandelt. Zu diesen Reliefs, die sowohl im Südwest-Palast als auch im Nord-Palast in Ninive angebracht waren, existiert ein umfangreiches Schriftwerk, das außer den Annalen auch sog. Beischriften umfasst, also kurze Szenenbeschreibungen, die zum einen gleich Sprechblasen in einem Comic-Strip direkt in die Bildhandlung eingebunden waren, zum anderen aber auch als separate Texte auf Tontafeln archiviert wurden (Weidner 1932-33; Borger 1996). Womöglich stellen letztere schriftlich skizzierte Bildvorstellungen dar, von denen lediglich ein Teil bei der Ausführung der Reliefs umgesetzt wurde. Eine dieser Beischriften entwirft folgendes Bild:

> „Ich, Assurbanipal, der König von Assyrien, zog mit dem abgeschnittenen Kopf Teummans, des Königs von Elam, den ich unter dem Beistande Assurs erlangt hatte, freudig in Ninive ein.“ (Weidner 1932-33: 13.44-46)

Ein Relief mit Darstellung dieser Szene ist nicht bekannt, doch können vergleichbare Triumphszenen des assyrischen Königs herangezogen werden (Abb. 11), um darüber zu befinden, ob die im Text erwähnte Freude des

Herrschers im Bild sichtbar wird. Explizit scheint dies zunächst nicht der Fall zu sein. Implizit bedeutet jedoch Freude ein Wort mit weiten Konnotationen und kann der emotionale Ausdruck dafür sehr verschieden sein, weshalb in der triumphalen Würde und distanzierten Erhabenheit des assyrischen Herrschers im Bild auch ein tiefer Ausdruck seiner Freude gesehen werden könnte.

Ähnlich verhält es sich mit der Inthronisation des elamischen Vasallenkönigs Ummanigash, eine demonstrative politische Handlung, die in Elam im Auftrag des assyrischen Königs durchgeführt wurde. Das Ereignis ist auf einem Relief aus dem Südwestpalast in Ninive dargestellt (Barnett, Bleibtreu und Turner 1998: Taf. 304-305): Der elamische Vasallenkönig wird von einem ranghohen assyrischen Soldaten an der Hand vor die sich unterwerfenden Elamer, darunter eine Gruppe von Musikanten, aus der Stadt Madaktu geführt. In der Beischrift zu dieser Szene heißt es:

> „Ummanigasch, der Flüchtling, den Diener, der meine Füße erfasst hatte, ließ auf meine Anordnung hin *voll Freuden* in das Land Susa und das Land Madaktu mein General (Abgeordneter), den ich ausgesandt hatte, einziehen und ihn Platz nehmen auf dem Throne Teummans, den meine Hände überwältigt hatten.“ (Weidner 1932-33: 17.11-14)

„Voll Freuden“ sind mithin die Worte, die unsere Aufmerksamkeit verlangen und bei denen es sich fragt, inwieweit sie in der bildlichen Darstellung zum Ausdruck gelangten. Zwar ist hier Freude weder aus den Gesichtern noch den Gesten den beteiligten Personen abzulesen, doch könnte sie als intendiertes Moment einer rituell-inszenierten Handlung verstanden werden und damit als ein reales Moment der zeitgenössischen Bildbotschaft.

Das Ereignis, das der Zeremonie in Madaktu vorausgeht, ist die Schlacht am Ulai, in der Teumman besiegt und enthauptet wird (die Leichen dieser Schlacht treiben im Fluss entlang des unteren Bildrands des Madaktu-Reliefs). Seine Kopftrophäe wird anschließend nach Ninive überführt und dort als Symbol des assyrischen Triumphes von Assurbanipal effektvoll in Szene gesetzt (Bonatz 2004). Hierzu berichtet eine der Beischriften:

> „Nabu-damiq und Umbadara, die Vornehmen, die Teumman, der König von Elam, mit einer frechen Botschaft geschickt hatte und die ich in vollem Zorn über ihren Herrn vor mir zurückgehalten hatte, den Kopf Teummans, ihres Herrn, den man herbeigebracht hatte, sahen sie vor mir. Umbadara raufte seinen Bart, Nabu-damiq durchbohrte mit seinem eisernen Gürteldolche seinen Leib.“ (Weidner 1932-33: 12.37-43)

Das Ende dieser Szene beinhaltet zwei sehr starke emotionale Reaktionen seitens der ehemaligen Verbündeten Teummans, für die der Textautor auch starke, bildhafte Worte wählt. Leider findet sich hierfür kein entsprechen-

des Relief, weshalb es nicht möglich ist, darüber zu entscheiden, ob Text und Bild kongruent sind, wenn es um die Beschreibung und Darstellung von Emotionen geht. Es existiert jedoch eine Darstellung aus der gleichen Ereignisserie, welche den gambuläischen König Dunanu zeigt, der bei der Prozession Assurbanipals nach Arbela den Kopf des Teumman um den Nacken gehängt bekommt (Abb. 12). In dieser Szene, in deren Hintergrund die Folterung von Gefangenen stattfindet, sieht man, wie ein anderer Gambuläer mit einer heftigen Geste auf Dunanu einwirkt, ihn anscheinend zu schlagen droht. Der konkrete Inhalt dieser Auseinandersetzung lässt sich ohne textlichen Bezug nicht benennen. Man erahnt jedoch, dass es sich um eine emotionale Überreaktion handelt, für die der Kontext der Szene genügend Anlässe bietet und bei der sich die vorherige Beobachtung zu bestätigen scheint, dass starke emotionale Reaktionen dann ins Bild gesetzt wurden, wenn sie zur Kennzeichnung der Schwäche und Ohnmacht von Feinden dienten.

Seitens der Assyrer, geschweige denn des assyrischen Herrschers, sind vergleichbare heftige Gefühlsausbrüche nicht zu beobachten. Deswegen erstaunt es, in einer der Beischriften folgende Reaktion Assurbanipals beschrieben zu bekommen:

> „Den Kopf Teummans, des Königs von Elam: mit Dolchmessern die sehnen seines Gesichtes durchschnitt ich (Assurbanipal) und spie auf ihn.“ (Weidner 1932-33: 11.35-36)

Der Hass des assyrischen Königs auf seinen elamischen Feind, der in dieser symbolischen Handlung zum Ausdruck kommt, findet offensichtlich keinen Eingang in das Narrativ der Bilder. Kritische Stimmen mögen anmerken, dass hier eine archäologische Überlieferungslücke vorliegen könnte und wir tatsächlich nicht wissen, ob die Szene nicht doch dargestellt wurde. Ich halte dem jedoch dagegen, dass die assyrische Bildideologie keinen Raum für derart mächtige Gefühlsausbrüche des assyrischen Königs lässt. Was für die Nachwelt bleibt, ist ein allein im Text imaginiertes Bild, das sich aber mit vielen anderen Bildern vergleichen lässt, die uns real vor Augen stehen (Abb. 13): der stumme Schrei eines seines Körpers beraubten Gesichts, das zur Maske geworden, nun mit durchtrennten Sehnen und beschmutztem Antlitz auch die letzten Züge seiner menschlichen Würde verliert. Es ist der stumme Schrei der Gemordeten, Gequälten und Gedemütigten. Ein Schrei, der bis heute wortlos verhallt, denn nichts von dem, was uns die assyrischen Bilder sichtbar machen, dient dem Respekt der menschlichen Natur. Auf dieser Ebene der Bildanalyse erscheint die Darstellung von Emotionen als ausgesprochen emotionslos. Sie ist trügerisch in ihrem Schein, die Wirklichkeit zu präsentieren, und dafür umso bezeichnender in dem, was sie nicht zeigt. Dies ist das Kernproblem einer Emotionsforschung, die sich kritisch dem Bereich des Alten Orients zuwendet und dabei die bildliche Evidenz vor Augen hat.

Abb. 1. Die im Untergesicht wirkenden Kräfte (nach Huter). Links: grobe, sinnliche Triebe und Kraft, rechts: edle sinnliche Triebe und aristokratische Lebensart (aus Kupfer 1963: 65, Fig. 8 und 9).

Abb. 2. Königlicher Bediensteter, Nimrud/Kalhu, Nordwest-Palast, ca. 865-860 v. Chr. (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 118927).

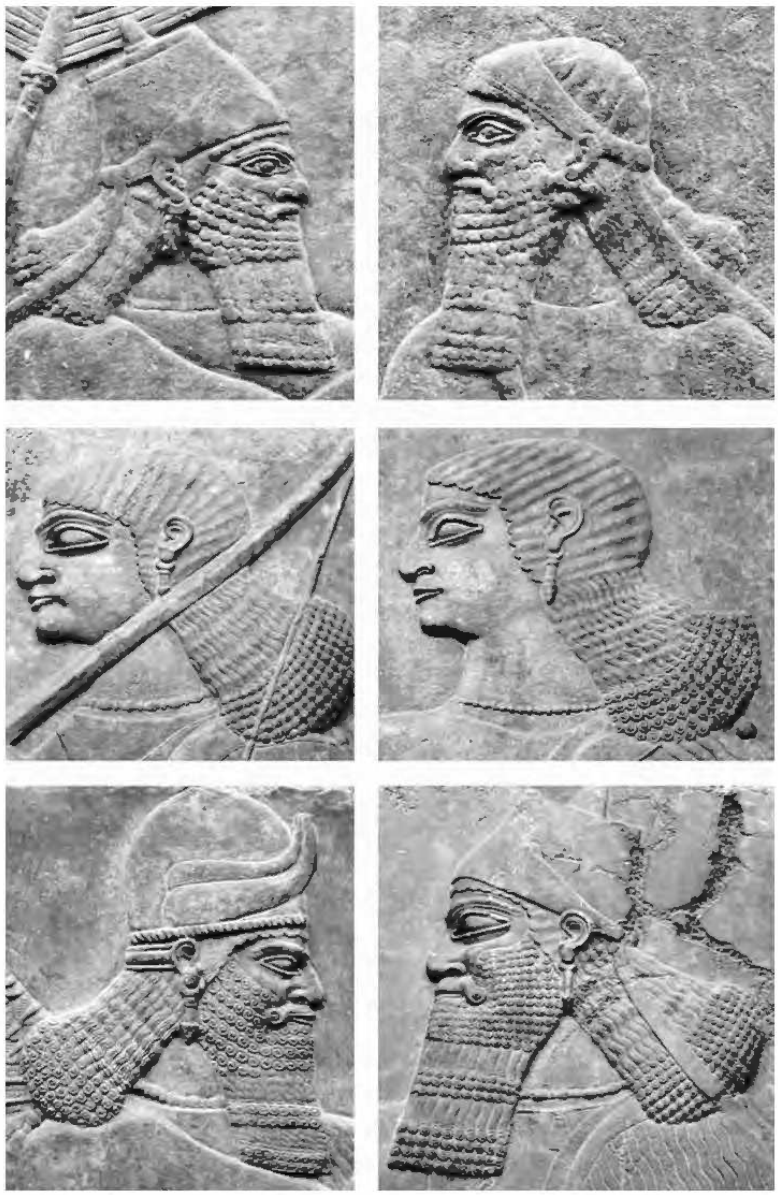

Abb. 3. Assyrische „Gesichter“, alle Nimrud/Kalhu, Nordwest-Palast, ca. 865-860 v. Chr. Von oben links: König (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 124549) , Kronprinz (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 124549), königlicher Bediensteter (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 118928), königlicher Bediensteter (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 118927), geflügelter Genius (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 118876), König (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 118928).

Abb. 4. Kopf eines geflügelten, menschenköpfigen Löwen, Nimrud/Kalhu, Nordwest-Palast, ca. 865-860 v. Chr. (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, WA 118801).

Abb. 5. Assurnasirpal II. (883-858 v. Chr.), Nimrud/Kalhu, Tempel der Ištar Šarrat-niphi (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 118871).

Abb. 6. Assyrischer Hauptgott (Assur oder Schamasch) in der geflügelten Sonnenscheibe Nimrud/Kalhu, Nordwest-Palast, ca. 865-860 v. Chr. (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 124531).

Abb. 7. Deportation von Frauen aus einer eroberten Stadt. Nimrud/Kalhu, Nordwest-Palast, ca. 865-860 v. Chr. (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 124552).

Abb. 8. Frauen auf dem Turm einer belagerten Stadt. Nimrud/Kalhu, Nordwest-Palast, ca. 865-860 v. Chr. (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 124552).

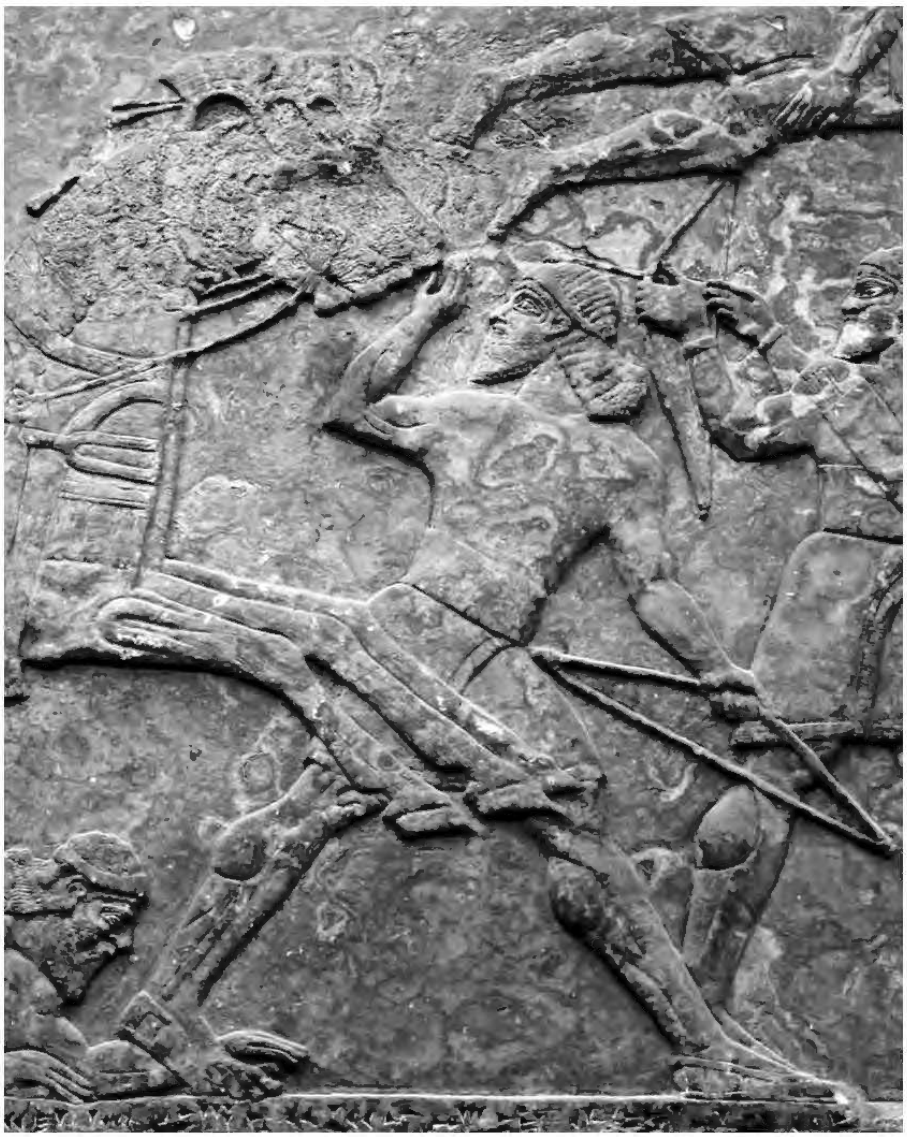

Abb. 9. Fliehende Feinde. Nimrud/Kalhu, Nordwest-Palast, ca. 865-860 v. Chr. (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 124542).

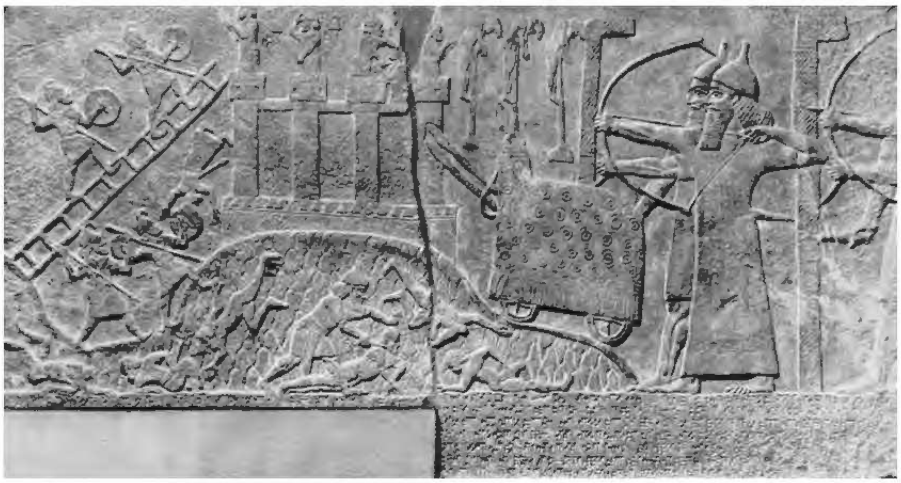

Abb. 10. Eroberung einer Stadt. Nimrud/Kalhu, Zentralpalast, ca. 740-735 v. Chr. (British Museum, WA 115634+118903, aus Orthmann 1975: Abb. 214).

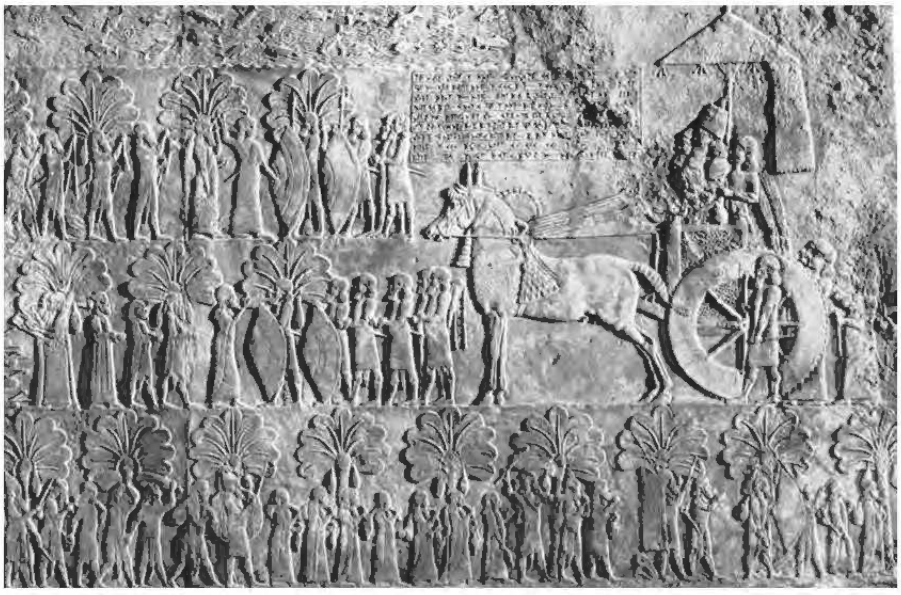

Abb. 11. Triumphzug in Babylonien, Ninive, Nord-Palast, ca. 653-652 v. Chr. (British Museum, WA. 124946, aus Orthmann 1975: Abb. 239).

Abb. 12. Disput unter zwei gefangenen Gambuläern, Ninive, Südwestpalast, ca. 653-652 v. Chr. (British Museum, Detail von WA 124802, aus Barnett, Bleibtreu und Turner 1998: Taf. 312, Abb. 385c).

Abb. 13. Abgeschlagene Köpfe von babylonischen Gegnern, Ninive, Südwest-Palast, ca. 640-620 v. Chr. (Foto: Simone Haack, British Museum, Detail von WA 124825).

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# Visualization of Emotions – Potentials and Obstacles
# A Response to Dominik Bonatz

Elisabeth WAGNER-DURAND

## *1. Avant-propos*[1]

The anthropologist Catherine Lutz has written: "emotions are anything but natural",[2] which contradicts the idea that there are universal emotions that have only limited, controllable, and transcultural display. If we accept Lutz's statement, then research on emotions in ancient and therefore foreign visual cultures might be even more challenging than one might expect. Thus, one has to look not only for any emotional display in the visual cultures of the ancient Near East but also for their culturally specific understanding and their culturally specific triggers.

Based on the assumption that emotions have a physiological basis and that their stimuli or catalysts, perceptions and displays are at least partly socioculturally determined (see Fig. 1), there are many obstacles to face. Before beginning the discussion of when, how, and why emotions materialize in visual cultures, however, we are left with the question of what we mean when talking about emotions.

## *2. Definitions and Disagreements*

### *2.1. Emotions – a question of common sense?*

The term emotion, in contrast to words such as affection, passion, and desire, has only been in use for two hundred years.[3] Many seem to believe, however, that the understanding of emotion(s) is universal and that it has a common meaning. Recently, Reisenzein and Müller wrote that one may be deceived into believing that if one feels an emotion, one would know exactly what this emotion constitutes:

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1 This response should not be mistaken for a comprehensive introduction to emotion and archaeology or emotion and visual studies. The author neither strives for this nor feels in any way suited for such an attempt. This stated, a very good introduction to the issue of archaeology and emotion research can be found in Tarlow 2000 and more recently Tarlow 2012.

2 Lutz 1988: 5.

3 For a history of the term emotion, see Dixon 2012.

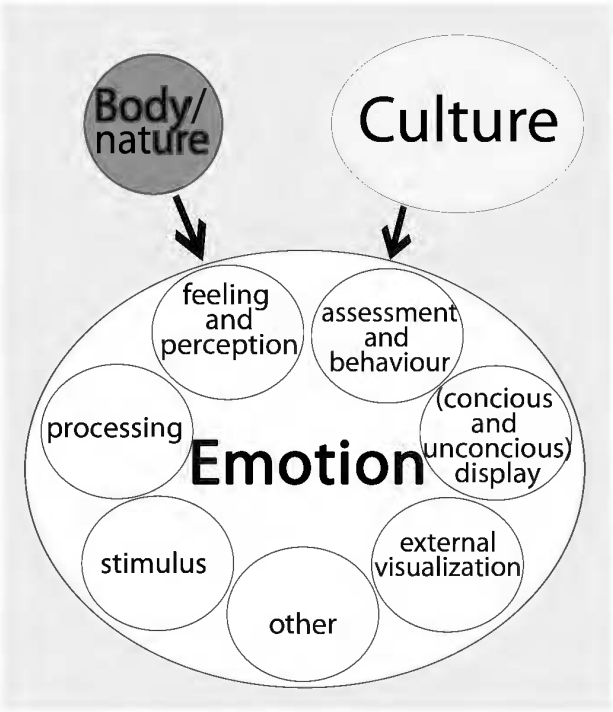


Fig. 1. Emotions – a tentative approach to visualizing their multifaceted character (by the author).

> „Man könnte meinen, wer selbst zum Beispiel Angst empfinde, wisse *eo ipso*, was Angst sei; mit dem Erleben von Angst sei ihm auch schon der Begriff der Angst gegeben. […] Im Übrigen wäre die Annahme, das Erlebnis bringe *eo ipso* den Begriff mit sich, für einigermaßen anspruchsvolle mentale Begriffe schon viel weniger plausibel."[4]

In this vein, many cultural scholars, such as Dominik Bonatz,[5] tend to understand the term emotion broadly, avoiding distinct definitions. Whether Bonatz is hesitant to define the term or assumes that emotion has a common meaning, he is in very good company. By talking, for example, about despair and pain, he names both a mood and a sensation that could be distinguished from the range of emotions – a distinction that may be valid to

4 Reisenzein / Müller 2012: 9. Further, they wrote: "Freilich gehören Emotionswörter zum Vokabular von Menschen, die selbst Enttäuschung, Freude, Furcht und andere Emotionen erleben. Daraus folgt aber nicht, man habe allein aufgrund des eigenen Erlebens auch Begriffe von Emotion, Enttäuschung, Freude, Furcht usw."

5 Bonatz in this volume.

some and insignificant to others. From a psychologist's or neurologist's point of view, however, we are not talking about the distinction between tomayto-tomahto, but tomayto-potayto, when discussing moods, sensation and emotions.[6] To explain the hesitation about or even resistance to definitions with respect to emotions, archaeologist Sarah Tarlow wrote of the 'risk of losing some of the richness of what emotion language means in everyday life'.[7] Historians Rom Harré and W.G. Parrot considered the restrictive power of (mainly psychological) definitions, stating that 'precision is good, but omission can be bad'.[8] That may be especially true for historical and cultural scholars, who study specific historical contexts, cultures, and their emotional worlds. In an introduction to the psychology of emotions, even psychologists W.-U. Meyer, A. Schützwohl, and R. Reisenzein stated that a strict definition might often be neither helpful, possible, nor needed.[9] As much as I understand their position, however, it also prevents us from finding a common language and understanding. Even if we assume that we mostly talk not only about neuronal and bodily functions and processes but also about perceived, reasoned, reflected, and asserted feelings and moods, we should state our awareness with respect to terminology about emotions. That by no means implies that we are restricted to those emotions defined by psychology or neurology, as long as we make ourselves clear about the terminology we use. Mutual understanding is also necessary to maintain a dialogue between the humanities and other disciplines and to demonstrate that we have something to contribute to the research on emotions. By considering definitions to be a helpful tool to ensure mutual understanding and by drawing on the strengths of our own fields, we might show how cultural and social settings influence emotional lifeworlds and their display, the latter being the focus of this workshop.

To summarize, it can be said that a shared definition of the term emotion, despite its discussed ambiguity, both in daily life and in scholarly discourse, essentially facilitates fruitful discussions on emotions and their display in ancient Near Eastern cultures.

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6 Still, there is no consensus in psychology or related disciplines. Carrol Izard recently reviewed psychologists' ideas of emotions and joined all the basic elements cited into one idea: "Emotion consists of neural circuits (that are at least partially dedicated), response systems, and a feeling state/process that motivates and organizes cognition and action. Emotion also provides information to the person experiencing it, and may include antecedent cognitive appraisals and ongoing cognition including an interpretation of its feeling state, expressions or social-communicative signals, and may motivate approach or avoidant behavior, exercise control/regulation of responses, and be social or relational in nature" (Izard 2010: 367).

7 Tarlow 2000: 713.

8 Harré / Parrott 1996: 4. Further, "there is a tension between theorists' need for clarity and their need not to stray too far from the everyday category they initially set out to explain."

9 Meyer / Schützwohl / Reisenzein 2001: esp. 23.

*2.2. A selected working definition from psychology*

Despite their reluctance with respect to definitions, which may – at least partly – be caused by the abundance of psychological definitions that depend on crucial aspects such as stimuli, cognition, experience (affective aspect), behavior, function, and so on[10], Reisenzein, Meyer, and Schützenwohl have provided a working definition that understands an emotion as a time-limited, distinct incident (such as joy, sadness, anger, or fear) (see Fig. 2).[11] This must be a current psychological state of an individual, possessing a distinct quality, intensity, and duration. It tends to be object oriented and disposes of aspects of experience, physiology, and behavior.[12]


Fig. 2. Defining aspects of emotions. Adapted from Meyer, Schützwohl / Reisenzein 2001: 24.

Some aspects of this definition or other definitions influence our specific understanding of emotions and, in turn, their potential visualization. Thus, feelings could, for example, be distinguished from emotions by under-

[10] For an overview of psychological definitions until the early eighties see Kleinginna / Kleinginna 1981. A clear and plain introduction to the term emotion can be found in Uhrig 2015: 27-35.

[11] As well as envy, pride, surprise, pity, shame, guilt, jealousy, disappointment, and relief.

[12] Meyer / Schützwohl / Reisenzein 2001: 24. On pages 24-36, this definition is explained in detail; these details will not be considered here.

standing them as the experience of emotions. Simplifying statements by neurologist A. Damasio's remarks on the procedural links between emotions and feelings, one could argue that in his opinion, emotions are not perceived until they are felt.[13] Furthermore, and according to the definition given above, emotions have a distinct time frame that might, depending on its defined limits, exclude moods such as being in love, pathological conditions such as being depressed, and distinct, long-term cultural (group) phenomena such as the so-called German Angst.[14] Moreover, emotions influence both physiology and behavior; both may be visually displayed.

### *2.3. Disagreements: "Two households both alike in dignity"*[15]

Less surprising, there is no agreement on a definition of emotion, even among those cultural and anthropological scholars who offer definitions. Anthropologist and ethnologist Birgitt Röttger-Rössler[16] and archaeologist Sarah Tarlow both describe two fundamental positions: Tarlow calls them the "biological essentialist" and the "social constructivist" position.[17] The former basically holds to the idea of primary and basic emotions[18] that are (evolutionarily) biological in nature, culturally influenced but not culturally determined.[19] The latter pole is represented by those who strongly emphasize cultural and social aspects of emotions.[20] The two poles seem to have moved toward each other in recent years, suggesting that both approaches might be valuable for deepening our understanding of emotions.[21]

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13 Damasio 1999: 283-284. Note that Damasio, who is concerned with the self and the proto-self, distinguishes between 'having a feeling' and 'knowing a feeling'. Interestingly, William James' late 19th century's theory on emotions stated that emotion are none other than the perception (i.e., the feeling) of the physical reaction released by a specific trigger. See Meyer / Schützwohl / Reisenzein 2001: 138.

14 The literature on German Angst is broad. See, for example, Wierzbicka 1999: 123-167.

15 Quoted from the first line of the Prologue of William Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*.

16 Röttger-Rössler 2004: esp. 7. Later on, in another context, Röttger-Rössler and others describe two approaches from biology and psychology: theories "of basic emotions that focus on innate biological mechanisms" and "theories focusing on appraisals – the so-called appraisal theories – because these can be brought in to explain the cultural and semantic modification of biological emotional processes" Engelen et al. 2009: 23. These approaches can be compared to, but in my opinion, not equated with Tarlow's two poles described above.

17 Tarlow 2000: 714.

18 The range and number of primary emotions whose functions are often seen in an evolutionary perspective are still debated.

19 Röttger-Rössler 2004: 7.

20 For further examples of these poles, see Röttger-Rössler 2004; see also Tarlow 2000: 715ff.

21 See the volume edited by Markowitsch / Röttger-Rössler (2009), especially the contribution by Engelen et al. (2009).

### *2.4. Emotions as social practices*

With respect to the latter pole, anthropologist Michelle Z. Rosaldo once stated that "Feelings are not substances to be discovered in our blood but social practices organized by stories that we both enact and tell."[22] Furthermore, she stated that emotions are:

> "self-concerning, partly physical responses that are at the same time aspects of a moral or ideological attitude; emotions are both feelings and cognitive constructions, linking person, action, and sociological milieu".[23]

Well aware of Rosaldo's contributions to the field, cultural psychologists Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama defined emotions as:

> "a set of socially shared scripts composed of various processes – physiological, subjective, and behavioral – that develop as individuals actively (personally and collectively) adapt and adjust to their immediate sociocultural, semiotic environment. Emotions allow and foster this adoption and they result from it."[24]

Thus, emotions constitute social practices that we should incorporate in our research as cultural scholars, since those practices shape societies and are reshaped by them. These observations of the bodily aspects as well as the sociocultural nature of emotion should lead us to look at the diversity, not at the simplicity, of human emotional display in ancient cultures. By refraining from prefabricated and non-art historical approaches, Dominik Bonatz follows such an approach.[25] By recognizing gestures as one possible universal display of emotion, however, his approach also tacitly tends toward the essentialist perspective.[26]

## *3. On the Significance of Emotions: Any Agreements after All?*

Despite these fundamental incongruities, there are aspects one might agree upon. First, emotions are essential to human beings, to our self and consciousness as well as to our decisions. Damasio stated that the self is (at least partly) shaped by our (bodily) feelings and the (conscious) reflection of the feeling.[27] Whether one follows Damasio's theory or not, one might at

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22 Rosaldo 1984: 143.
23 Levy 1983: 128. Levy cites Rosaldo's (unpublished) conference organizing paper in his opening paper of the Ethos volume on shame and guilt.
24 Kitayama / Markus 1994: 339-440.
25 Bonatz in this volume.
26 Ibid.
27 Damasio 1999.

least agree on the importance of emotions in human decision making, whether conscious or not. After all, emotions affect all areas of human life, from politics to religion and from private matters to scientific research.

Moving into the arena of visual culture studies, the second aspect one might agree upon – going admittedly in a different direction – is that emotions and visual culture are strongly connected. Images potentially render emotions visible; they condense them and evoke them in human beings. Christiane Kruse writes that one function of images[28] is the evocation of emotions.[29] In this purpose of images lies one of their powers: they are able to elicit emotions and corresponding reactions in the observer. Alfred Gell spoke of distributed personhood and primary as well as secondary agents.[30] Taking the role and form of secondary agents, images are enabled to release emotions in humans. How and why these emotions are released depends on several factors: situation, intention, reception and so on. Some emotions evoked may be intended by those who created the images; some may grow out of the cultural and social foreignness of the particular images. In his talk Dominik Bonatz assumed that the Assyrian *aladlammu* sculptures (see Fig. 3) elicited emotions in the observer[31]. He further states that narrative visual situations must have evoked strong emotional reactions as well.[32] I strongly agree with both perspectives. Bonatz also questions the intentionality of this effect, however, when he assumes that those emotions were not the intended objective of these images. In my opinion, one of the strong representational powers and impacts of Neo-Assyrian images is their intention to provoke emotions in the observer.

Thus, images, as always, create a sphere of ambivalence. On the one hand, there is the potential to encapsulate emotions in visual media; on the other hand there is the visual crystallization of human cultural and social specificity.

## *4. Obstacles to Face*

It is the visualization of emotions that we focus on in this workshop. Without a doubt, many will have objections to this research, and there are many obstacles we must overcome. To some obstacles we will not find an easy

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28 Those functions encompass representation, communication, and reflection (plus several sub-functions, amongst them evocation of emotions and affects). See Kruse 2003: 42. One should note that she herself refers to paintings from 1100-1650.

29 Subsumed under reflection and communication; see Kruse 2003: 42.

30 Primary agents are "intentional beings who are categorically distinguished from 'mere' things or artefacts", secondary agents are "arfacts, dolls, cars, works of art, etc. through which primary agents distribute their agency in the causal milieu, and thus render their agency effective" (Gell 1998: 20).

31 Bonatz oral communication.

32 Bonatz in this volume.

Fig. 3. Human-headed winged lion. Metropolitan Museum of Art no. 32.143.1–.2, www.metmuseum.org.

solution. Still, that should not prevent us from engaging with the subject matter, and it does not preclude us from examining possible approaches and interpretations. Some of these obstacles will be discussed below.

### *4.1. What releases emotions?*

First, we are faced with questions of what releases emotions, which emotions are released, and what do we feel when an emotion is triggered? An often unexpressed human ethological assumption, of the very same tenor and attitude that Dominik Bonatz described and criticized in Carl Huter's and Amandus Kupfer's approaches,[33] is that people tend to think that some-

[33] See Bonatz in this volume.

thing they fear is feared by others as well. Therefore, many assume that images or visualized situations that evoke fear in them did the same in ancient people (see Fig. 4). There are probably universal triggers for fear, such as facing death, but there might also be culturally specific and even individual catalysts:[34] We know that the Semai fear many natural phenomena.[35] While they might feel fear upon seeing a butterfly, which is understood as a supernatural appearance predicting mischief,[36] Europeans would rather experience the joy of nature, based on a romantic understanding of the world. Another example is the Maori, who – at least culturally – seem to be devoid of the concept of soldierly fear. They do believe that if a warrior feels or even worse, displays this kind of fear, this fear does not come from within the person but is brought in from the outside; it is inflicted on the warrior by some *atua* because of a *tapu*.[37]

Thus, when we assume we can identify the expression of fear, whether in the face, in gestures, or in body movements, we must be aware that the primary assessment of the situation that triggered this display is our very own. Therefore, we need to check whether this is congruent with the emic view of the society that created the image. That may actually be the case with Assyrian society, of which we have the luxury of written sources relating situations that trigger emotions as well as emotions that were emically assumed to be noteworthy. Exactly this latter point is found in Dominik Bonatz's notion that emotions may not have been displayed *ad personam* in Assyrian art except to reveal the weakness of the defeated enemy (see Fig. 4).

### *4.2. 'Hypercognized' and 'hypocognized' emotions*

Once an emotion is triggered, we still do not know how it was perceived in antiquity or how it was felt, understood, and socially validated. In this vein, psychiatrist and anthropologist Robert Levy spoke of 'hypercognized' – socioculturally relevant – and 'hypocognized' – socio-culturally irrelevant or subdued – emotions, which differ from society to society.[38] Thus, emotions

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[34] Research has shown that emotional reactions to so-called neutral stimuli can be conditioned. In times when ethics were rarely an issue in psychological experiments, Watson and Rayner conducted their quite famous, but undoubtedly unethical experiment with baby/toddler Albert, conditioning him to experience fear when exposed to formerly neutral stimuli. Meyer / Schützwohl / Reisenzein 2001: 79-86.

[35] Robarchek 1979.

[36] "Joking about or laughing at a butterfly angers Ngku and thus is an invitation to certain disaster. The dragonfly is so dangerous that one should not even mention its name or take notice of its presence." Robarchek 1979: 558.

[37] Heelas / Strongman / Strongman 1996: 184; Plamper 2015: 4-5.

[38] Levy 1984: esp. 400-401. One marker of differentiation seems to be the common and socially agreed upon lexicon of the emotion in question. This lexicon can be very broad,

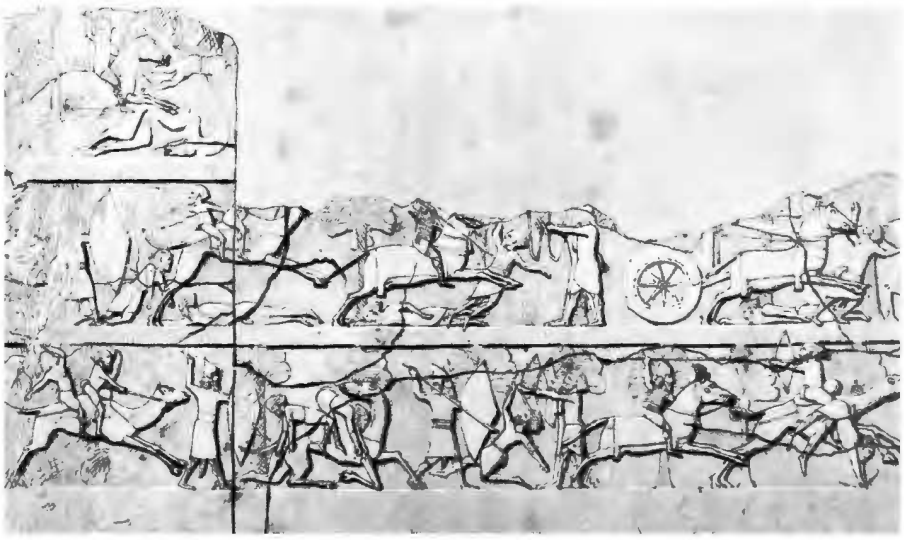

Fig. 4. Relief from a series of panels in Ashurbanipal's North Palace in Nineveh, Room L: Or. Dr. VII, 29: original lost. Bedouin warriors in the already lost battle against the Assyrians: their gestures and postures are immediately and often unconsciously read with respect to a modern evaluation of the situation (Barnett 1976, pl. 32).

are socially negotiated. Family, society, politics and religions provide a certain framework in which emotions are understood and appraised on a mutual basis. Some emotions gain more social significance than others. Others may be socially appraised as undesirable and therefore need to be suppressed. While this social evaluation of emotions significantly shapes an individual's experience, each person's feeling of an emotion remains distinct. Thus, we should be aware that only those emotions visualized in images that are both verified as being on display and that consist of a specific expression can – at least emically – be understood. If that is not the case, they might get lost in translation.

### *4.3. The written (and spoken) evidence*

Some societies develop very broad lexica for specific feelings that seem to be insignificant or even unknown to others.[39] Thus, if we identify an emotion visually displayed and tentatively label it in our language, we must be

arguing for a lively discourse about this emotion, or very narrow, hinting to its possible social suppression.

[39] See for example: Röttger-Rössler 2004; Ponsonnet 2014; Zhang 2014; and Levy's notion of hyper- and hypocognized emotions, among others.

aware that there might be more to it and should look for the lexicon and semantics of the cultures investigated. That leads us to appreciate the overall importance of textual studies to build up the background knowledge needed to decode the images in question.[40] Thus, the study of the emic lexicon of emotions is of utmost importance. If there are emotions we do not know of, we might have difficulties in understanding their visual display.[41] Also, as Dominik Bonatz rightly observes, certain texts deal with selected situations using a specific emotional vocabulary.[42] The visual display, however, might not exactly correspond to these written accounts or might be distinct from our expectations. Thus, the visual expression of an emotion (Bonatz uses the example of joy) could be visualized not (only) in the display of the individual person, on his face or in his gestures, but in the overall presentation of a festivity, a specific ritual, or an event reserved for joyful occasions. Bonatz also intriguingly refers to the intermediality between texts and images as well as their ambiguous relationships by linking epigraphs and images with respect to the representation of emotion.[43]

### *4.4. More on culture and emotional display*

A culture's lexicon and semantics might help us to overcome another obstacle, already mentioned above: some emotions, such as the so-called basal or primary emotions – fear, surprise, joy/happiness, sadness, anger, contempt, disgust[44] – might exist in every human being,[45] but their display might be subdued or considered socially inappropriate to put on public display, whether on the face, in bodily movements, or in images. Those emotions

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40 That by no means implies that we should exclude non-literate cultures from considerations; the knowledge of a lexicon of emotions, however, makes it easier to study emotions in different societies, whether ancient or modern. We still have to develop a distinct methodology to deal with this issue in non-literate societies.

41 Thus, I consider the study of emotion in the written sources to be very important to get an insight into the emic emotional lexicon and its semantics. Needless to say, the texts should also be understood as socially and ideologically conventionalized sources.

42 Bonatz in this volume.

43 Bonatz in this volume.

44 Ekman and Friesen once stated that there are six basal emotions; see, for example, Ekman / Friesen 1971: esp. 126. In the very beginning, interest was also included. See Ekman / Friesen 1971: 124. That assumption changed over time; currently, Ekman speaks of seven basal emotions; see, for example, Ekman 2010: 82. See the general debate on basal emotions in Reisenzein 2000.

45 While universal facial expression is considered to be one defining aspect of basic emotions, "how many forms of expression are universal for one emotion" has not yet been studied (Engelen et al. 2009: 27). Also, the relation between expression and one distinct emotion seems to be in question: "They also have no one-to-one relation; that is, that there is no single specific form of facial expression for each emotion." See Engelen et al. 2009: 27.

might then not be hypocognized in the sense of being socially irrelevant; rather, they might be expressed, e.g. in written texts or by music, but not by the body of the person specifically experiencing this emotion.

Again, Dominik Bonatz[46] shares this point of view and states that fixed patterns, such as that of Huter's psycho-physiognomy for understanding the visual display of body and emotion in cultures not our own, are deeply problematic. Admittedly, by applying Huter's thesis to visual culture, Kupfer's work[47] is attractive on the first glance to researchers of ancient art; with respect to emotion and visual display, however, the works of Charles Darwin[48], physician Theodor Piderit,[49] and psychologists Friesen and Ekman[50] rest on a much more solid scientific basis and a sounder methodological approach than Huter's. The latter's work also shows a strong judgmental character that is mirrored in Kupfer's assumptions about ancient faces, as Bonatz vividly points out.[51]

Even if we assume that emotions are on display that are somehow universal in their unconscious and pristine display, emotion's visualization in Assyria, as stated by Bonatz and Zwickel alike,[52] does not operate through facial expressions. On the contrary, these facial expressions seem stereotyped and emotionally indifferent. Despite overwhelmingly conventional facial expressions in the Neo-Assyrian reliefs, there are, however, at least two aspects that make me wonder whether we oversimplify things here. First, the faces displayed in narrative (pseudo-)historic accounts[53] are mostly shown in profile (see Fig. 5), but to express emotions in the face it is much easier to use the *en face.* As such, it is an *en face* rendering that is used to display emotions in psychological studies. Second, the Assyrians put much effort into all of their images, into both their composition and their execution; thus, how can we believe that facial display did not matter to them? Many answers are possible. Maybe it was understood that the face was hard to read or that facial expressions could be deceiving with respect to emotions. Another solution is provided by Bonatz – namely, that emotional display on the face is something the Assyrians wanted to deliberately control and suppress.

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46 Bonatz in this volume.
47 Kupfer 1920.
48 Darwin 1872.
49 Piderit 1989; cf. Schmidt-Atzert 1996: 13-14.
50 Their publications are countless; see, for example, Ekman / Friesen 1971; Ekman 1994; Ekman 2003.
51 Bonatz in this volume.
52 Zwickel 2012 and in this volume; Bonatz in this volume.
53 Presumably, these narrative images are those that potentially display emotional situations and emotions themselves. Assyrian sculpture in the round has no narrative context per se (except for potential narrative performances). Nevertheless, they might display emotions via postures, gestures, coloring and potentially also via facial expressions. Pride, for example, is a basic emotion, which could be considered here.


Fig. 5. Emotionless Faces!? a) Head of a beardless royal attendant; b) foreign groom in a tributary procession, both from Khorsabad, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of John D. Rockefeller Jr., 1933, 33.16.2-1, 33.16.1 (OASC), www.metmuseum.org.

Even if we agree that there are transcultural facial expressions, whether they are easy-to-read or more hidden, so-called facial microexpressions, unchanged by socialization, it still seems questionable whether these expressions would find any manifestation in visual media that were subject to such a strict process of social and ideological control as the Assyrian imagery.

### *4.5. Emotional emblems/gestures/postures: signs of (non-verbal) communication*

Paul Ekman, who generally argues for basal emotions and their facial (micro-) expressions as universally valid and unconscious, understands some types of bodily expressions – for example so-called emblems – as culturally spe-

cific. Together with Friesen, he defines emblems as movements that "have a set of precise meanings which are understood by all members of a culture or subculture".[54] Thus, if we want to understand body language and its emotional value, we must release ourselves from our own values and socialization, being aware of the otherness of a past society's gestures and bodily expressions.

In this vein, we may take a look at the clapping of hands discussed by Nili Fox. In many cultural contexts, this gesture communicates "joy and approval".[55] Fox, in contrast, points out one textual example from the reign of Esarhaddon[56] in which, in her opinion, the clapping of hands stands for "rage".[57] She also describes a possible relation to ritual actions, and places two[58] Neo-Assyrian reliefs in this context: One relief[59] comes from Tiglathpileser III's Central Palace (see Fig. 6), and shows four officials (and a lion-cloaked figure), probably in a war ritual context during the Babylonian campaign, clapping their hands. Fox considers this as a sign of anger and hostility as part of a war ritual.[60] It seems not out of the realm of possibility that loud gestures of anger might be used in contexts of (war) rituals, possibly to expel evil thoughts, to drive fear away, or to enhance bloodlust, as is the case in other cultures.

Nonetheless, these observations on clapping hands may not be universally valid in Neo-Assyrian contexts. Natalie M. May refers to several settings in which the triumphal ruler and army are accompanied or welcomed by women or officials clapping their hands.[61] Under these circumstances, the gesture indicates approval and emphasizes the royal triumph. In this vein, she relates the overall situation to the "Assyrian war ritual" or – as she calls it – the "Assyrian field war ritual"[62], first published by Karlheinz Deller.[63]

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54 Ekman 2004: 39. For an older and more precise version see Ekman / Friesen 1972: 357.

55 Fox 1995: 49.

56 Fox 1995: 50 (transcription and translation of lines 55-62). I prefer the new edition by Leichty: (i 53) "I, Esarhaddon, who with the help of the great gods, his lords, does not turn back in the heat of battle, quickly heard of their evil deeds. I said 'Woe!' and rent my princely garment. I cried out in mourning, I raged like a lion, and my mood became furious. In order to exercise kingship (over) the house of my father I beat my hands together. I prayed to the gods Aššur, Sîn, Šamaš, Bēl, Nabû, and Nergal, Ištar of Nineveh, (and) Ištar of Arbela (i 60) and they accepted my word(s). With their firm 'yes,' they were sending me reliable omen(s), (saying): 'Go! Do not hold back! We will go and kill your enemies.'" Leichty 2011: 13: Esarhaddon I, Col I. 53-62.

57 Fox 1995: 50; she also cites examples where rage is expressed by beating the chest and striking the thigh.

58 The first one refers to the throne room reliefs B5, Fox 1995: 56, see also May 2012: 464-465, fig. 1a.

59 Barnett / Falkner 1962: pl. I and II: series A: upper Register sl. 5a: Woburn Abbey: 123.

60 Fox 1995: 58; Fox discusses earlier interpretations: ibid: 57.

61 May 2012: esp. 464-465, 470-471, 476-484; She also refers to Fox's second example.

62 May 2012, 461. The ritual as such does not explicitly refer to clapping the hands, yet it mentions anger and joy. Cf. May 2012, 462 (translation of the ritual).

63 Deller 1992.

Fig. 6. Relief Fragment from the Central Palace, Tiglath-Pileser III. From Barnett / Falkner 1962, pl. I (Or.Dr. III).

Dominik Bonatz posits that gestures in narrative Neo-Assyrian reliefs are recognizable via their visual context, in which they express a broad and indistinct array of emotions and moods. [64] This understanding, however, is based on the assumption that the ancient and modern appraisal of the depicted situations would be identical. Still, static visual representations, such as gestures of clapping the hands, present challenges for the interpreter. The production of noise by clapping hands can be interpreted in many ways: as approval, as joy, as anger, as aggression, and so on, depending on the context and circumstances of its performance as well as its emic appraisal.

### *4.6. Style as a cultural filter*

In the discussion during the workshop, Irene J. Winter rightly put forward the view that we should not dismiss style in our study of emotional display in the visual cultures of the ancient Near East.[65] Winter also elsewhere puts forward that "subject matter must be given physical form in order to convey itself visually"[66] and that "only in the unity of 'form-*plus*-content' that a given work of art realizes its ontological identity."[67] In this respect, by knowing culturally and temporally specific styles, we might be able to peel

64 Bonatz in this volume.
65 See also Winter's work on "affective style": Winter 2009.
66 Winter 2009: 425.
67 Ibid.

these layers of style off, avoiding misinterpretations, and to take a deeper look at how emotions might once have been displayed or, in contrast, how emotions might have been stylized or conventionalized. Further, Winter notes "that style is closely allied with the psychological stimulus known as 'affect'". If that is correct, style must be become part of any consideration of emotional visual display.

### *4.7. Back to the beginning: Identification does not equal understanding*

Any inference drawn from an identified, visually displayed emotion is difficult and culturally specific. Ekman gives an easy explanation for why reading faces should not be overrated, since we do not always know what triggered the emotion. He cites the example of Othello who thinks that Desdemona's despair and fear result from his murder of Cassio, not being aware that she fears her own unavoidable death by her insanely jealous husband.[68] Thus, how far should we go? We might see joy, anger, or fear, but what does it imply: do we know why someone is afraid? Or with respect to the discussion above, do we assume that someone is afraid because we might experience fear in that very same situation? We might perceive gestures of sadness and screaming, but does this communicate the true feelings of those shown or how much the person mourned was appreciated? Or is it a social convention? Is the emotion we attribute to the mourners the very same emotion they had from the very beginning, or is it an emotion released by the powerful effect of a group?

## *5. Summary I: Why Were Emotions Displayed?*

An important issue, discussed by Dominik Bonatz,[69] is when and why emotions were displayed. This issue encapsulates one of the core questions of the field of visual *emotionology*.[70] The display of emotions is not always just about emotions themselves. As Bonatz states, in the case of Neo-Assyrian art, it was not the main purpose of the Neo-Assyrian reliefs to visualize emotion in extreme situations.[71] Therefore, the display of emotions by gestures may first of all have been a vehicle of the representation of power. This comes close to an observation Zainab Bahrani made with respect to non-Assyrian women in Neo-Assyrian visual culture, an example Bonatz[72] also is drawn to when he cites women's gestures of despair. Ac-

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68 Ekman 2010: 81.
69 Bonatz in this volume.
70 For the term *emotionology* with respect to historical studies, see Stearns / Stearns 1985.
71 Bonatz in this volume.
72 Bonatz in this volume.

cording to Bahrani, these women were often depicted with postures and gestures of mourning[73] symbolizing defeat, irreversibility, and the closure of war.[74] Furthermore, Bahrani understands the involvement of women in warfare (hunting, protecting and caring for children) at a later date as the visual creation of an opposition between the passive female and the aggressive male[75] – thus, between dominant Assyrian warriors and effeminate defeated non-Assyrians. If that interpretation is correct, emotional display may have been used to increase both the narrative quality of the images and the invincibility of Assyrian kingship. Furthermore, there is surely more to it than just the increase of Assyrian reputation and fame; that, however, is one possibility why emotions may have been visualized in the apparently unemotionalized, (not to be mistaken with unemotional,) visual culture of Northern Mesopotamia.

## *6. Summary II: Why Study Emotions and Their Visualization in Ancient Cultures?*

Subliminally, the question of why one should study emotions and their visualization in ancient cultures may have been answered here. From my point of view, hardly anything is more human and therefore worthy of an anthropologically driven study than emotions. Our tendency to think that triggers, display, experience, and validation of emotions may have been the same over millennia, however, needs severe reassessment.

Used to a flood of images with displays of emotions ranging from overflowing joy to deepest grief, we must wonder why this was not the same in ancient cultures, why and when emotions were visualized in antiquity.

The bad news is that we are not yet able to understand the ways and mechanisms of emotions and their visualization in ancient Mesopotamia. We are left to develop special tool boxes and to gather more and more data as well as to discuss examples and hypotheses that might be tested over the course of time.

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[73] Bahrani 2001: 125.
[74] Bahrani 2001: 127.
[75] Bahrani 2001: 127.

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# The Iconography of Emotions in the Ancient Near East and in Ancient Egypt[1]

Wolfgang ZWICKEL

## *1. Introduction: Problems with the Interpretation of Emotions in the Iconography in Ancient Times*

The iconography of emotions was likely never a field of research for the Ancient Near East and Ancient Egypt. Only in the Lexikon der Ägyptologie can an article about emotions be found (Altenmüller 1977), in contrast to the Reallexikon für Assyriologie. In newer dictionaries for biblical studies like Das Neue Bibellexikon, the Anchor Bible Dictionary, the Calwer Bibellexikon or Herders Neues Bibellexikon no entry about emotions exists at all. In the Hebrew Bible we do not have a specific word meaning feelings, emotions or affects in general. But certainly the ancient Israelites had feelings, as the people from ancient Mesopotamia or ancient Egypt did. We only have words in the Hebrew Bible for specific emotions. The main question of my contribution shall be: Which kind of emotions could be expressed by art in ancient times? How did the ancient artists express these feelings? Since we have very few artistic representations from the area of Syria and Palestine, especially for the expression of emotion, I will mainly work with material from the neighboring areas of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Nevertheless, the artisans from Syria and Palestine lived in and shared the same cultural sphere.

Normally it is easier to express emotion by language than by iconography. This is the same for ancient times as for our period. Today the emotion "love" can easily be expressed by the symbol of a heart or of two hearts linked together, but also by the image of a kissing couple. While "love" is easy to be shown, "jealousy" is harder to be shown by iconographical symbols. With the help of digital search engines like Google, pictures may be found as well. But a closer look on those pictures shows that the identification of jealousy is not as certain as the identification of love. Some emotions can easily be understood; others are more difficult and not clear enough for identification.

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[1] This is a revised and enlarged version of a paper which was originally published with the same title in Egger-Wenzel / Corley (eds.), 2012, 1-25. I thank the publisher for the permission to republish my article, and Dr. Ken Brown (Mainz) and Prof. Dr. John Baines (Oxford) for improving my English.

In ancient times the expression of emotions was even more complicated – at least for modern people who want to understand those pictures. There are several reasons for this problem:

– For pictures from ancient times, and this is valid for Egypt, Mesopotamia and the few pictorial documents from Palestine as well, faces are typically portrayed in a stereotyped way. The individual and real person is not shown at all, but a typical and ideal character. E.g., for Egypt it was not a problem that a pharaoh usurped the statue of his predecessor, removed the name and wrote its own name on it. The faces have no or nearly no individual elements and represent just a typical person of that period. Very often the view of the figures is not directed to any specific object, but to a point at the horizon, far away. Also the bodies of the persons are not presented in a normal, but in an ideal way. Individual features of the faces are – except of the time of pharaoh Akhenaten (ca. 1353-1336 BCE) – rare. Only with the mummy portraits, which are certainly influenced by Roman portrait paintings, can individual and authentic features be found in Egypt. On the other hand, Hellenistic drawings changed the iconography in the Ancient Near East, too, but those also are relatively late developments. Symbols and actions, connected to certain emotions, may not be understood today anymore, because there were changes in the symbolism in the course of the time, and likewise different cultures have different ways to express their symbols for emotions.
– In the Ancient Near East and in Ancient Egypt emotions are sometimes expressed by gestures, attitudes and movements. Those gestures are normally different from the gestures we use today to express emotions (for examples see below). And not all feelings and emotions can be expressed by iconography. Therefore for modern spectators it is sometimes very hard to understand those pictures in the same way as the artist and the people in antiquity did.
– Very often we only have an official repertory of pictures. The representation of Egyptian or Mesopotamian kings does not have any space for emotions. Kings are to be shown in their power in glory. Such representations do not offer emotions at all in the faces of the persons. But they provoke emotions in the persons regarding those pictures. Looking at the picture of an Assyrian king standing in his chariot, covered by an umbrella, dressed in his royal garments, provokes respect and humility in the viewer. This is the same with the Assyrian soldiers with strong and unnatural muscles. This can be considered as a signal to the viewer that he or she has to accept the power of the Assyrian army and not to fight against those soldiers. The picture itself does not show any emotion, but the emotion happens in the viewer. He or she should be intimidated by the power of the Assyrian army, and this is the aim of the artistic representation.

– There is a distinctive difference between official and private art, at least in Egypt. All the aspects which were mentioned until now are connected with official drawings or reliefs. Even tomb paintings from Egypt have an official aspect, because the human beings represented there are not depicted as "normal" people, but as people who want to live in an eternal world. The number of real private drawings is rather limited. Typical examples are the erotic papyrus Turin 55001 or the drawings of the workers settlement in Deir el-Medina (see below for further remarks).
– Cylinder or stamp seals (often scarabs) are typical private items, but normally they are much too small to express emotions on faces. The format of the illustration limits the possibility of the artists to show any kind of feelings. Although we have an extremely high number of private relics, no depiction of emotions is possible.
– Even on larger objects the depiction of emotions depends on the quality of the carvers or chiselers who work the reliefs. Only in the major artistic centers like Egypt and Mesopotamia the artists were well trained. The quality of stone cutting in other regions (e.g. in Tell Halaf) was on a much lower level.

## *2. Problems with the Identification of Emotions*

A short look in the psychological literature suggests that there is no consensus at the moment about feelings and emotions. There exists an open list of different affects. I have no preference for any particular definition, but I use the term emotion or feeling in an encompassing and undogmatic way. Some of the emotions can be regarded as pairs with positive and negative expressions. Love is the opposite of hate, joy is the opposite of sorrow. Beside those pairs there are also some emotions of a rather neutral nature. The following list presents the main emotions and affects:

| *Negative* | *Neutral* | *Positive* |
|---|---|---|
| sorrow, sadness, grief, mourning | surprise | joy, joy of life |
| fear, despair | disappointment | |
| pain | guilt | |
| anger, hate | shame | love |
| anger, rage, disappointment, guilt, shame | courage, surprise | awe, gratitude |
| jealousy | duty | |
| disgust | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| aversion | | sympathy, pity, devotion |
| | indifference | interest |
| envy | | pride, haughtiness |
| instability, chaos | | stability |

I selected four specific kinds of emotions which are represented in ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern iconography. Because there are thousands of pictures from this region from the pre-Roman period, I took some typical and general pictures to show the kind of representation of emotions.

## *3. Examples for the Representation of Emotions in the Ancient Near East and in Ancient Egypt*

### *3.1. Joy*

If we would demonstrate joy today by a symbol, we probably would take advantage of a smiley. In ancient times the artists used dance and music to represent joy. Fig. 1, which is typical of the reign of pharaoh Akhenaten, is in a tomb at Tell el-Amarna. The time of Akhenaten is an atypical period in Egyptian art, and this picture is atypical for the representation of emotions in antiquity. This is the only period in the history of ancient Egyptian art, which showed individuality of normal persons and kings instead of the typical idealistic representation. Even if the faces of the seven dancers are very stereotypical, the movement is completely individual. The joy of life is expressed by the completely different movement and jumps of the dancers.

Another kind of the representation of joy is music. Fig. 2 is the lower part of an Egyptian stele from Abydos from the time of Ramesses II. The dynamic of the last relief – typical for the Amarna period – is missing here. But the turning back of the faces makes the whole picture living and shows the joy of the women. Music was almost always a symbol for joy, in Egypt as well as in Mesopotamia (cf. Keel [5]1996, 316 fig. 452). This is also true for Palestine, where every kind of dynamic expressions and joy is completely missing. We only can assume that the musicians on a cultic stand from Ashdod (Fig. 3) will also symbolize joy.

A particularly interesting group of Egyptian drawings are those on potsherds and limestone flakes (generally termed ostraca), which were found in the workers village of Deir el-Medina (1300-1100 BCE; cf. Brunner-Traut 1956). Some of them are just drafts of painters working in the Theban necropolis for large-scale decoration in the tombs. But there are also "private" paintings with animals or gods and goddesses, which are completely different from the official reliefs and drawings. As one example the naked

goddess Astarte riding on a horse is presented here (Fig. 3a). This drawing on an ostracon is very dynamic. The face of Astarte seems to laugh, and evidently she is happy.

### *3.2. Mourning*

Also for mourning, some typical pictures from different areas and periods can be found. Fig. 4 is part of a Book of the Dead of Hunefer from the time of Seti I (ca. 1285 BCE). While the people involved in the burial ceremony are represented in the stiff attitude typical of Egyptian art, the two women in front of the mummy clearly show emotions by lifting the hands up to the head in order to express sadness. Similar is the attitude in Fig. 5 from the tomb of Userhet in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna (19th dynasty). Here the mourning women put their hands on top of their heads. This likely does not represent the scattering of ash on the head, a ritual gesture mentioned very often in texts from the Hebrew Bible, but is rather a symbol for pain and sorrow. The mouth, half opened, symbolizes crying and groaning, connected with pain and sorrow. Depictions of mourning women may also be found on the Ahiram sarcophagus from Byblos (Fig. 6). Here the women undressed their breasts as a symbol of self-humbling and beat their hands on their head and belly. Similar gestures can be found on pottery stands from the Philistine territory which are influenced by Mycenaean culture (Fig. 7; cf. Dothan 1982: 237-249).

Sorrow and pain are represented in a particularly impressive manner on a Roman coin, dated to the year 70 AD (Fig. 8). To the left of the date-palm, which characterizes Judea, a Roman soldier is presented, who puts his foot on his helmet, which is no more needed after the destruction of Judea and Jerusalem. On the right side, a Judean woman is shown, sitting at the bottom, the head leaning on her arm and mourning about the destruction of Jerusalem. This small picture, only 4 square centimeters, is a typical example of how artists in the Roman period were able to show emotions.

### *3.3. Fear, despair*

Fear and despair are not directly represented in Egyptian pictures, but rather superiority. The Egyptian pharaoh is presented on the pylons of temples holding his enemies by their hair (Fig. 9). The scale of the pharaoh is colossal in comparison with the other persons shown on the reliefs. There is no fear to be seen on any of the enemies' faces. But the whole situation represented on the pylons can only be understood as a context in which the enemies would be afraid. Instead of showing this emotion on the faces, it is characterized by the difference in scale: the enormous pharaoh in contrast

with the smaller enemies. Emotions are not explicitly rendered, but they arise in the viewer when looking at that relief.

Comparable are pictures showing the conquest of Canaanite cities (Fig. 10; cf. Keel 1975). Again the figure of the pharaoh is greatly enlarged. The inhabitants of the conquered towns do not show fear on their faces. But by offering incense to the pharaoh, they recognize his majesty and power. This is contrasted by their inability to defend the city and to organize their independence. Nevertheless, the pain of the experience to be conquered by the Egyptian army is presented by symbolic acts like the burning of incense.

Even if a man was attacked and gored by a lion, the fear of the man is not shown on his face. Fig. 11 is a relief from the early Ptolemaic period in the lion temple in Musawwarat es-Sufra. The lioness shows resoluteness, the men's desperate situation is only represented by the attitude of his body. Additionally he stretches his right hand in the air. Normally people are represented in Egyptian art standing upright. The winded attitude on this relief clearly shows the problematic situation of this man, not the stiff face. This is definitely not a gesture of prayer. The man looks in the direction of the lion and not, as usually in prayer depictions, in the direction of the (supposed) god.

A raised right hand is found in a picture (Fig. 12) on a cylinder seal from Babylon dated to about 1800 BCE. A dragon, symbolizing chaos, tries to devour a man. The man's uplifted hand symbolizes his cry for help, while the face seems to be rather apathetic, as far as this can be said about a seal image only 1.8 cm high. The raised hand seems to be a symbol for fear and a helpless situation in Egypt as much as in Mesopotamia. This symbol will hardly be understood by today's viewers.

In this context I will refer to a picture already discussed above (Fig. 10). Also in this relief the leader of the Canaanite town raises his hand. He holds a broken bow in his hand, which is worthless for military purposes. The parallels cited make it evident that the raised hand is a symbol of fear in this picture as well.

A final picture in this group presents once again the raised hand as a sign of despair (Fig. 13). It is part of a late predynastic Egyptian palette dating about 3100 BCE. The bull likely symbolizes the political leader subjugating his enemies. Once again there is no emotion visible on the face of the man. Having fear can only be recognized by the general composition of the picture – and by the hand lifted up. If anyone looks at this picture it is natural to assume that this man is terrified. But the fear is not shown on the face of the man; it appears in the mind of the viewer, because he compares automatically his own emotions with the emotions expected in the picture. And the fear is once again only shown in the iconography by the uplifted hand.

An ivory plaque from Ugarit, dating to the 14$^{th}$ century BCE (Fig. 14), offers another aspect of fear, but it is nevertheless comparable to the other

pictures. Since it is relatively large (14 x 12.5 cm), the artist would have been able to present facial features, especially because ivory can more easily be worked than many materials. But neither the king of Ugarit on the left side with a sword in his hand, nor the enemy thrown down by him, has any facial features connected with this situation. If we separate the facial features, they could be part of a peaceful banquet scene, too. Once again the general depiction offers some emotions. The king of Ugarit is at a larger scale, symbolizing his status as leader and victor. The weapon in his hand symbolizes his strength. And he holds the enemy – like the Egyptian pharaoh on the pylons of the temples – by his hair. The enemy is kneeling and raises his hands as a symbol of deference.

Another limestone relief from the 5th dynasty (2480-2350 BCE) allows some additional observations (Fig. 15). It presents starved nomads. Their faces are mostly stereotypical, but the emaciated bodies, with individual ribs to be seen, are evidently a symbol of despair. Here too, the attitudes of the nomads show their hopeless situation. On the right side of the upper row a member of the community has to be supported, because he is no longer able to sit upright. In the lower row on the right and left sides women put their hands on their heads as a gesture of despair and sadness. Once again it is the general impression of the picture which creates emotions in the viewer, but not the features of the faces.

In Egyptian art there is another possibility to express the hopelessness of a situation. This can be observed in the famous reliefs presenting the battle of the troops of Ramesses III against the Sea Peoples (Fig. 16). In the Ancient Near East good feelings are generally connected with order, while bad feelings are connected with disorder and chaos. According to this system order is connected to one or several gods, who are responsible (together with the king) to establish, stabilize, preserve, and protect this order. This battle scene presents the Egyptian army in an order that is shown by the upright and parallel bodies of all the Egyptians. By contrast, the army of the Sea Peoples is in complete disorder. Their bodies are contorted and lying in opposite directions. Only in a divinely organized world can one feel good emotions. Once again the general composition of this relief awakes different emotions in the mind of the viewer, although no emotions are present on the faces themselves.

As we have seen, fear and despair of human beings is normally not represented through human facial expressions in Egyptian or Mesopotamian art. Nevertheless, the artists were well able to present emotions, but they only did so in the faces of animals (cf. for drawings on sherds and stones Brunner-Traut 1956). In the 5th dynasty mastaba tomb of Ti at Saqqara (ca. 2350 BCE), a herd of cows is shown crossing a river (Fig. 17). A calf, which is not yet able to cross by itself, is carried on a man's back. The face of this calf is horrified because of the unnatural and unusual situation, and evidently it is crying. Behind the calf the adult cows are presented crossing

the river as well, and the mother cow is easy to identify: she too is crying, while the two other cows enjoy the fresh water or are completely uninvolved. For the Egyptian artist it was evidently possible to render those emotions of animals in a highly expressive manner.

Another Egyptian relief, in the 6th dynasty mastaba of Mererukaat Saqqara, may be added (Fig. 18). Once again it clearly presents emotions on the faces of animals. The scene shows some hippopotamus harpooned during a hunting scene. The mouth of the hippos is widely opened, the tongue is rolled, and the eyes are enormous. You nearly feel as an observer that you can hear the cries of the hippos. Again we have a naturalistic scene presenting the emotions of the animals very clearly.

The ability to present the emotions of animals in pictures is also attested in later times. A relief in the temple of king Seti I at Abydos presents the young king Ramesses II and a prince hunting a sacrificial bull (Fig. 19). The eyes of the prince and of the king face straight toward the horizon and hence look above the level of the bull. The attitude of the two bodies is idealized and not realistic for a hunting scene. The two men are depicted in the classic form of the human figure in Egypt. Completely different to the depiction of the two men is the presentation of the bull. You can observe the fear in his face.

Even in Mesopotamia emotions could be presented in relation to animals (Fig. 20). Mesopotamian lions are a typical depicted symbol of disorder. Conquering a lion also means defeating disorder or at least being able to reduce it. Therefore it was one of the main duties of the kings to fight every year against lions that were kept in the royal gardens, and to kill them. By doing this, the king's ability to maintain the divine order was symbolized. As in Egyptian reliefs, the eyes of king Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 BCE) are fixed to the horizon, not looking toward the lion. Even the horses are not anxious because of the proximity of the dangerous animal. Completely different is the attitude of the lion. Running forward, he looks backwards. His eyes are concentrated on the fight against the king. The mouth is wide open, the animal is roaring. In his face his approaching death is clearly visible – in strong contrast to the faces of the horses, which are very stereotypical.

Summing up, one may conclude that the emotions of human beings are normally not presented in their faces, neither in Mesopotamia nor in Syria nor in Egypt. Only sometimes fear may also be expressed by lifting up a human arm. Instead of facial features the emotions are often expressed by the general layout of the whole iconographical scene. This offers to the viewer different kinds of emotions. The traditional depiction of human faces normally allowed no emotional or individual expressions. The facial expressions simply had to be presented in an ideal and characteristic way, free of any emotion. But the absence of emotions on those pictures is not connected with an inability of the ancient artists to present them. On the

contrary: Representing animals they are well able to express all kind of emotions on the faces.

### *3.4. Love and sympathy*

Love and sympathy form the last group of emotions I want to present here. They can be expressed by a close bodily contact. Fig. 21 shows the tenderness between the god Osiris and the king Sesostris I. Fig. 22 shows the tender affectionate connection of a royal couple from Ugarit. On both pictures the partners are looking each other into the eyes – the god and the king on the one hand and the couple on the other hand. Both partners have nearly the same height. Characteristic features in the faces are not presented, but the attitude – the embrace of the partner's body by the arm, the holding of the partner's hand or touching the shoulder and the arm of the partner – expresses a tender connection between both.

In Egypt many statue groups of couples are attested, both seated side by side, sometimes of the same height, but sometimes with the women a little smaller than the man. Fig. 23, dating to the 4$^{th}$ dynasty, is a typical example of such a pairs. In this type of representation of a couple, both are looking at a distant point at the horizon. Although they do not look at each other, the close connection of the couple is indicated by the hand of the woman. While the man is depicted in a standard pose with the arms hanging by his side, the woman embraces his body with her right arm and puts her left hand on his upper arm. Their torsos do not touch. Nevertheless a great tenderness and love is shown by the attitude of holding another person in one's arm. Again emotion is not symbolized by faces, but by posture. The presentation of a woman was evidently not so fixed in Egyptian art as that of a man.

Only during the time of pharaoh Akhenaten was this strong artistic canon broken. In Fig. 24 Nofretete and Akhenaten sit opposite each other, looking at their partner. This composition symbolizes love and tenderness. Both partners are touched be the sunbeams of the sun god Aton. Both are playing with their children. One child sits on Nofretete's lap, while the other one is held in Akhenaten's arms. This natural scene of daily life has never been shown in Egyptian art before or after Akhenaten. The parents' love of their children is represented by the close bodily contact. One child is kissed by the father; the other one speaks to the mother while pointing with her finger at the father. To present ordinary life in such a natural way is an innovation in Egyptian art. Artists of the time of Akhenaten presented a daily scene, which was normal in all families at any time before and after. They had no difficulty in depicting such a scene, which shows that they were likely trained in doing so, mainly only for exercises. In the official art besides the time of Akhenaten emotions could not be depicted in the same

way because this was illegitimate and not accepted. In order to show emotions as well, the Egyptian artists searched for possibilities to express them in the context of the strict conventions narrow frame of normal art.

Also in Assyrian art the presentation of love and tenderness is rather hidden. Regarding the famous relief Fig. 25 from the time of Ashurbanipal, there is no real contact between the couple of the banquet scene in the center. The king does not look at his wife but at the horizon above her head. Likewise, she does not look in the eyes of her husband. Their connection is evident from their high-ranking position: he reclines on his divan, while she sits on her throne. Both are prestigious persons; the servants, right and left of the divan, pay respect to them. Both king and queen have the same hand pose: they are holding drinking bowls. Just one small detail in the picture may be understood as symbolizing love and sexuality: To the right and to the left of the divan stand two incense burners. Such incense burners were used in private houses in order to purify the room ritually after sexual intercourse. It seems likely that the sexual connection between the couple is symbolized in this relief by the presence of those instruments.

A quite different emotion is expressed incidentally in this picture. On the left side the head of an Elamite leader cut off by Ashurbanipal is hanging in the tree. This is a signal to the viewer that Ashurbanipal is a proud and successful king, who is aware of his achievements and rules with great power. Once again this emotion is not directly expressed, but represented by a symbol: the decapitated head of an enemy exhibited as a trophy.

The art of Syria and Palestine was always more provincial than that of Egypt or Mesopotamia. Typical reliefs representing care and love of children can be found there, too. On an orthostat from Karatepe, dating to the 8th century BCE, a woman is shown nursing a rather adult child (Fig. 26). Children were normally breastfed until the third year. This child is, if the representation is even remotely naturalistic, older than three years. Therefore this picture does not represent the feeding of a child, but may be interpreted as a symbolic representation of care and love.

Similar pictures may be found from Egypt. In Fig. 27 (cf. Keel 1992a) a tree presents a woman's breast to a figure of a king. As in comparable examples, the tree represents a goddess offering food and beverage to an adorer. This symbolic representation shows the care and love of a goddess to the people praying to her. Once again no emotion is visible on the faces, but the emotion is represented by a symbolic gesture.

Love and sexuality may also be represented by the symbol of a dove. Fig. 28 shows a goddess of love with doves, which are her symbolic attributes. In Fig. 29 (cf. Keel 1992b) a dove is flying from the goddess to a seated person, symbolizing her love for him. The dove as a symbol of love was still current in the middle of the second millennium CE, but is mostly lost in our time.

Sexuality and love are also shown on some cylinder seals with a goddess exposing herself. A typical representation is Fig. 30, where the naked fertility goddess is opposite to the weather god Baal approaching on the hills. Although the sexual connotation, symbolizing the insemination of the earth/goddess by the weather god, is more prominent in this cylinder seal, the scene is also a depiction of love and desire.

Completely different depictions are found on a unique Egyptian papyrus (erotic papyrus Turin 55001). This papyrus, dated to the 12th century BCE, is composed of two separate sets of scenes: one showing a group of animals making music, the other depicting couples having sex in various positions (Omlin 1973). These sexual practices belong in a completely private atmosphere, which is hardly presented in other Egyptian papyri or drawings but is typical of Egyptian love songs. Especially the faces of the men, but also in part of the women, show voluptuousness through their open mouths (Fig. 31; another non-official example: Brunner-Traut 1956, Tf. XX fig. 52). This is a private connotation of love which is normally not presented in official art. Comparable pornographic pictures are also present on (private) Mesopotamian cylinder seals (Fig. 32), but the small size of the cylinders does not allow them to render emotions.

## *4. Summary*

This short overview has shown that more kinds of emotions are represented in ancient art than may at first be noticed. Emotions were represented differently in antiquity than in modern times. Gestures, attitudes, and symbols, some of them very alien for us today, were used in ancient times to express emotions. Public images of grief and sorrow, but also pictures of animals and "private" artifacts, impressively show the ability of ancient artists to express emotions pictorially. But it was very unusual and out of order to present emotions on the faces of human beings, at least when they were of official status. The artists searched for other possibilities to express emotions in the context of official art. Generally it seems that emotions, especially joy and mourning, were more often connected with women than with men. Modern viewers feel emotions when looking at many of those pictures and reliefs. Those emotions are, however, not directly presented in the pictures themselves, but rather result from the general layout and composition of the pictures.

Fig. 1. Dancing women, Amarna, relief on a wall of Tomb no. 1, southern tombs, 14th century BCE (Keel [5]1996: 314 Fig. 449).

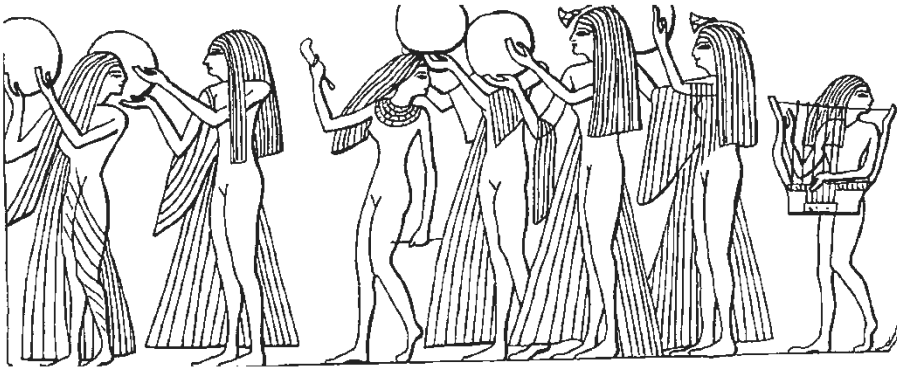

Fig. 2. Women making music, stela from Abydos, 13th century BCE (Keel [5]1996: 315 Fig. 450).

Fig. 3. Clay stand presenting musicians, Ashdod, 10th century BCE (Keel / Küchler 1982: 44 Fig. 29).

Fig. 3a. Riding Syrian Goddess, painted ostracon from Thebes, 14th century BCE (Brunner-Traut 1956: Tf. VIII, Fig. 16).

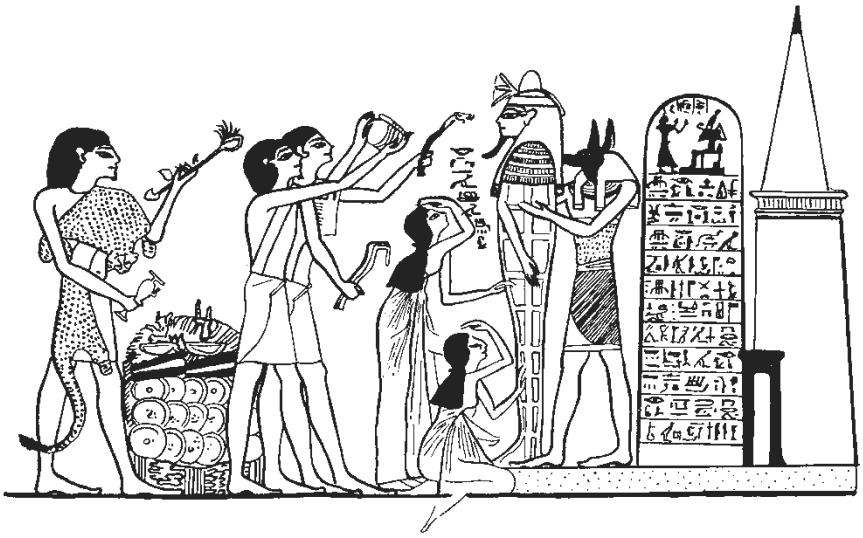

Fig. 4. Mourning women, Papyrus of Hunefer, 14th century BCE (Keel [5]1996: 59 Fig. 76).

Fig. 5. Mourning women, painting in the tomb of Userhet (no. 51) in Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, 14th/13th century BCE (Keel [5]1996: 297 Fig. 428).

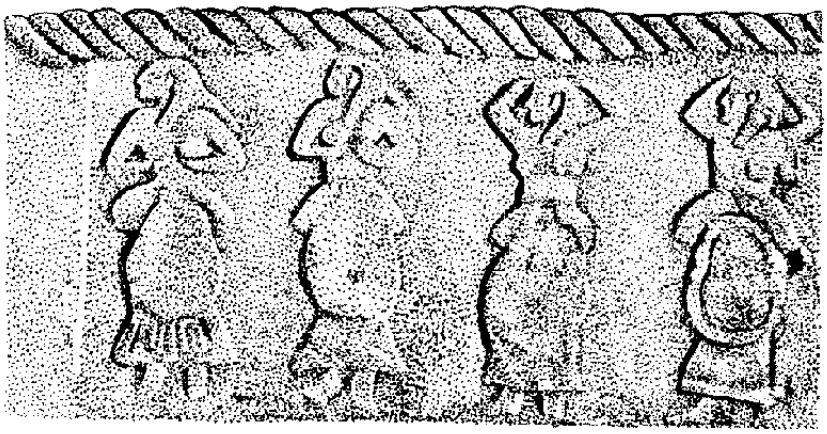

Fig. 6. Mourning women on the front of the Ahiram sarcophagus, ca. 1000 BCE, Byblos, today National Museum Beirut (Zwickel n.d. Fig. 408).

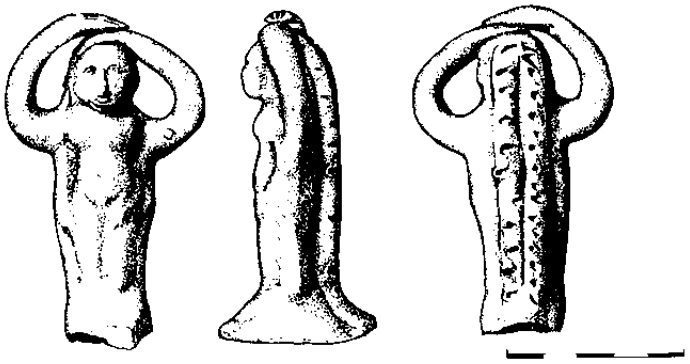

Fig. 7. Mourning woman, 12th / 11th century BCE, likely from Tel Etun (Dothan 1972, Fig. 10B).


Fig. 8. Roman Iudaea Capta coin, 71 CE, Vespasian (Schefzyk / Zwickel 2010, title page).

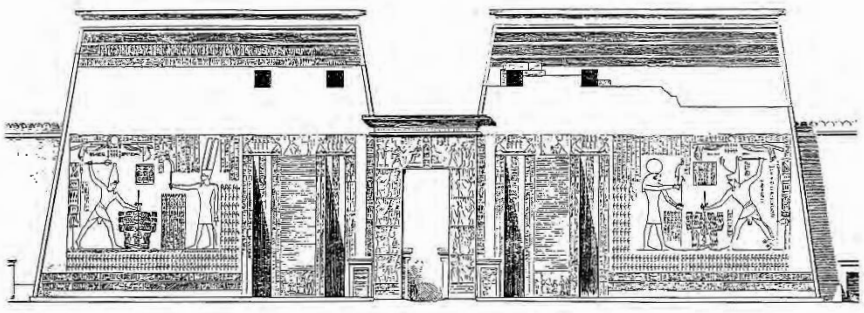

Fig. 9. Egyptian pharaoh fighting against enemies, depicted on the pylon of the temple of Ramesses III (1187-1156 BCE) in Medinet Habu (Keel 1990: 18 Fig. 7).

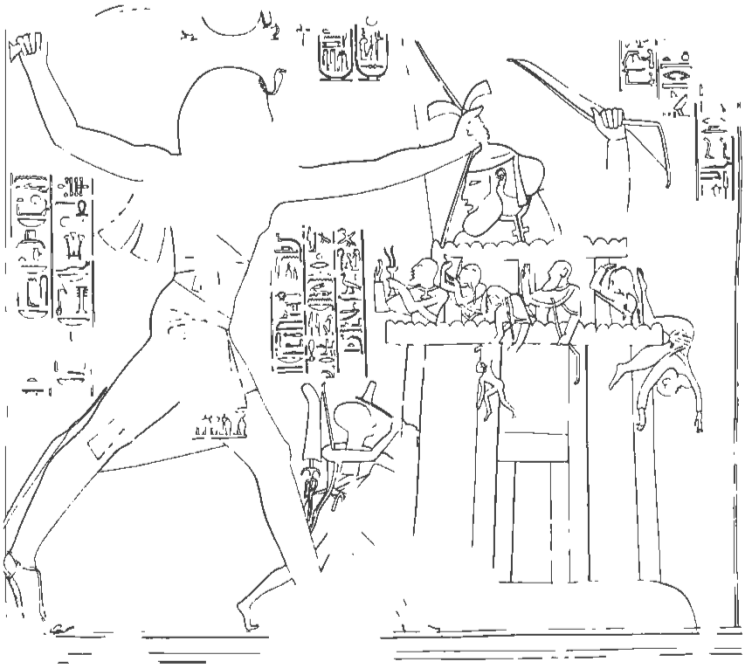

Fig. 10. Ramesses II (1279-1213 BCE) figthing against a Canaanite town, relief from the northern wall of the temple of Beit el-Wali (Keel [5]1996: 91 Fig. 132a).

Fig. 11. Relief from the Meroitic lion temple in Musawwarat es-Sufra, 3rd century BCE (Keel [5]1996: 75 Fig. 101).

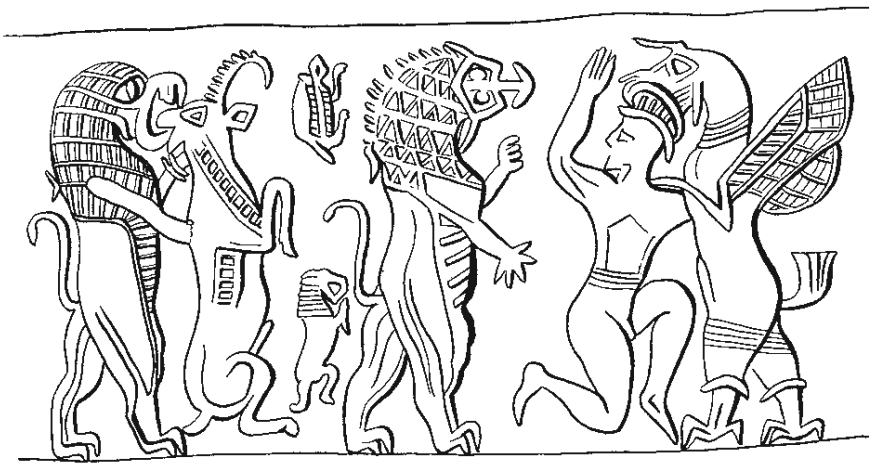

Fig. 12. Cylinder seal, ca. 1800 BCE, today British Museum (Keel [5]1996: 62 Fig. 81).

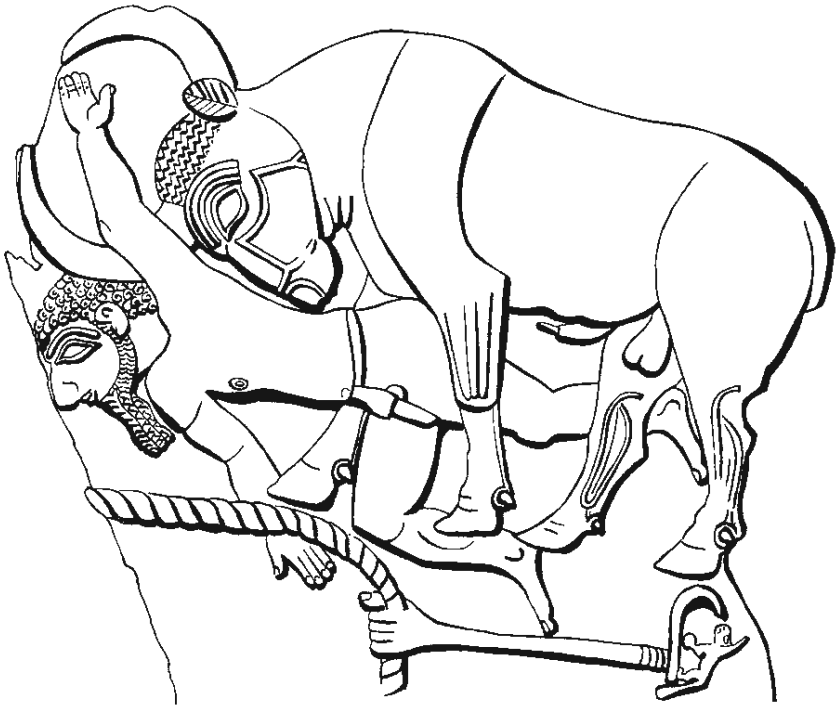

Fig. 13. Egyptian cosmetic palette, Archaic Period, ca. 3100 BCE, today in the Louvre (Keel [5]1996: 76 Fig. 105).

Fig. 14. Ivory plaque, Ugarit, 1400-1350 BCE, today National Museum Damascus (Keel [5]1996: 275 Fig. 403).

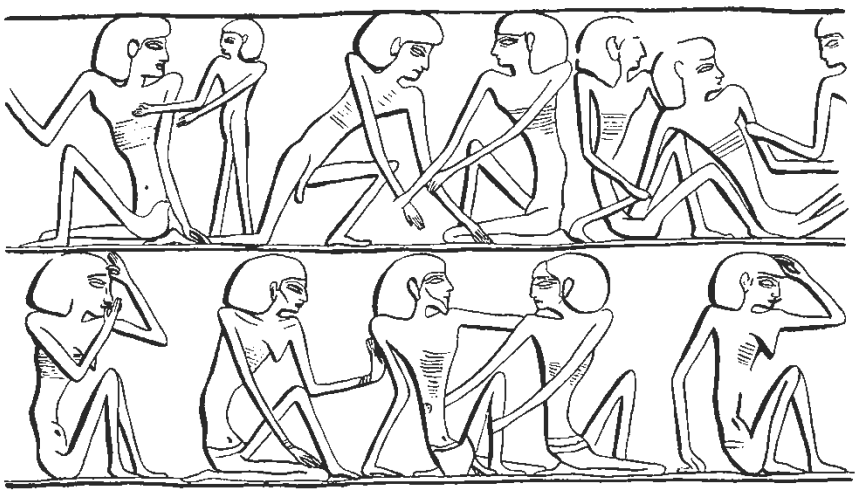

Fig. 15. Famine relief, Saqqara, from pyramid causeway of Unas, Egyptian, 5th dynasty (Keel [5]1996: 66 Fig. 88).

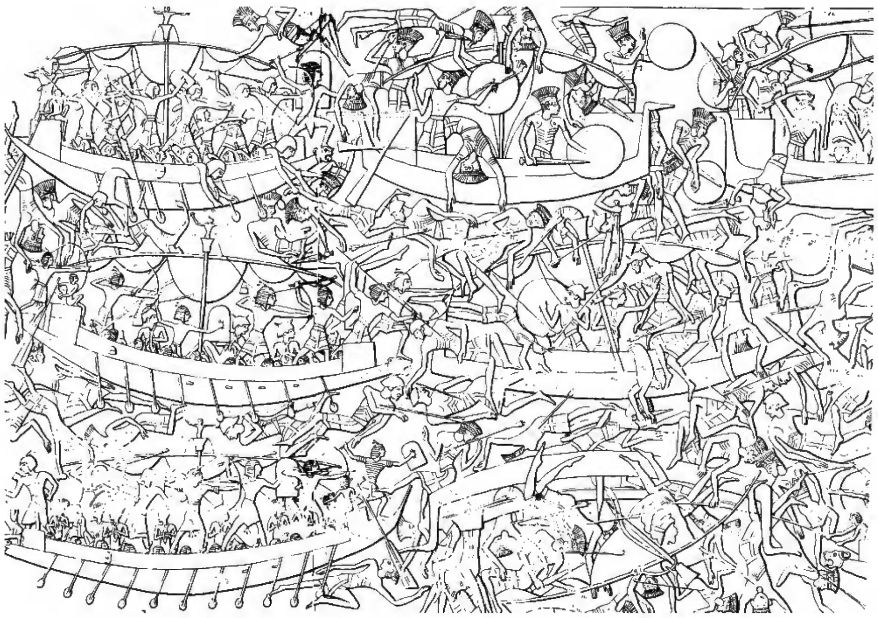

Fig. 16. Battle between Ramesses III and the Sea Peoples, Medinet Habu, 12th century BCE (Dothan 1982: 10).

Fig. 17. Man carrying a calf through water, Mastaba of Ti, Saqqara, 5th dynasty (Lange / Hirmer 1967: Fig. 69).

Fig. 18. Harpooned hippos, mastaba of Mereruka, Saqqara, 6th dynasty (Lange / Hirmer 1967: Fig. 77).

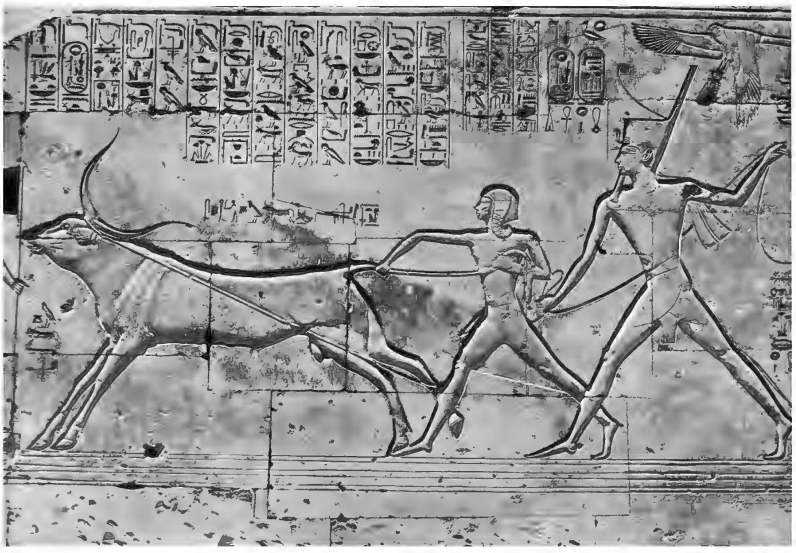

Fig. 19. Ramesses II and a prince catching a bull, temple of Seti I in Abydos (Lange / Hirmer 1967, Fig. 224).

Fig. 20. Lion hunt, from Kalah/Nimrud, time of Ashurnasirpal II, 7th century BCE (Orthmann 1985: Fig. 205).

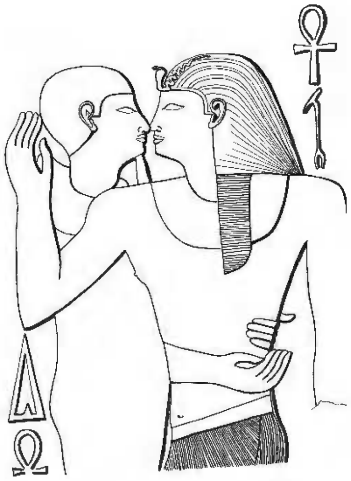

Fig. 21. Relief from Karnak, Sesostris I, ca. 1900 BCE, now Cairo Museum (Keel [5]1996: 180 Fig. 274).

Fig. 22. Ivory tablet from Ugarit, 1400-1350 BCE, today National Museum Damascus (Keel [5]1996: 264 Fig. 387).

Fig. 23. Pharaoh Mykerinos and Queen Khamerernebti, 4th dynasty, Museum of Fine Arts Boston (Lange / Hirmer 1967: Fig. 41).

Fig. 24. Pharaoh Akhenaten and Queen Nofretete playing with their children, today Egyptian Museum Berlin (Lange / Hirmer 1967: Fig. 184).

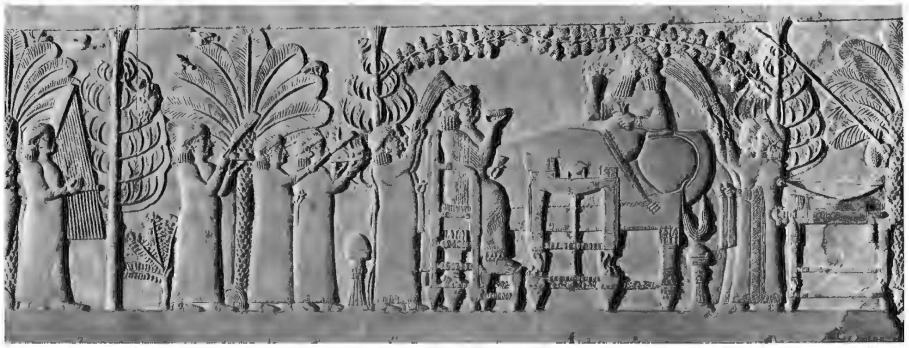

Fig. 25. King Ashurbanipal banqueting in the garden with the Queen, Ninive, today British Museum (Orthmann 1985: Fig. 247).

Fig. 26. Goddess (?) with child, Karatepe, North Gate, late 8th century BCE (Orthmann 1985: Fig. 365).

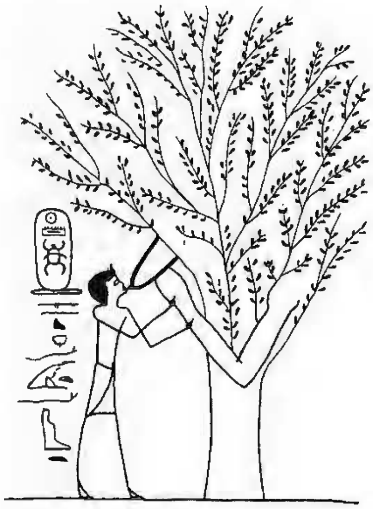

Fig. 27. Tree goddess, tomb of Tuthmosis III in the Valley of the Kings (Keel 1992: 96 Fig. 40).

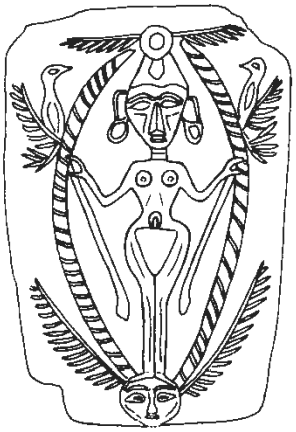

Fig. 28. Naked Anatolian/Syrian goddess, Kültepe, around 1700 BCE (Keel / Schroer 2004: 115 Fig. 69).

Fig. 29. Cylinder seal, Old Syrian period (Keel / Schroer 2004: 113 Fig. 67).

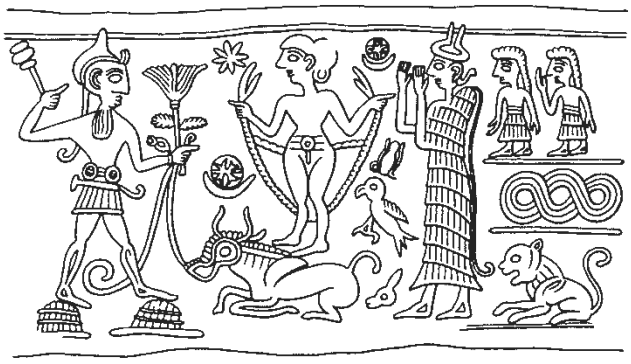

Fig. 30. Cylinder seal, Old Syrian Period (Keel / Schroer 2004: 21 Fig. 25).

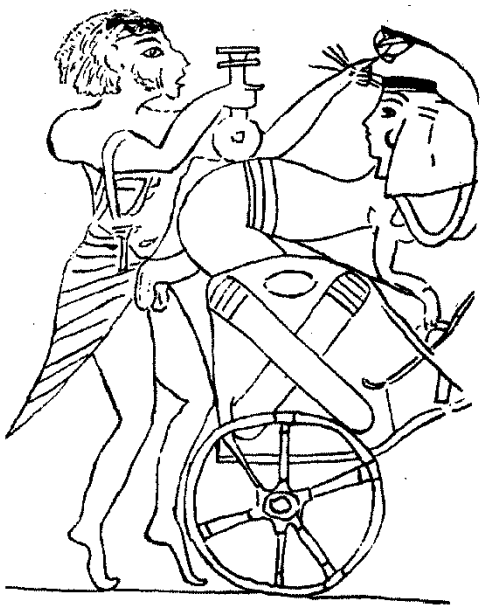

Fig. 31. Erotic scene from Turin papyrus 55001, ca. 1150 BCE (Omlin 1973: Pl. XVIIa).

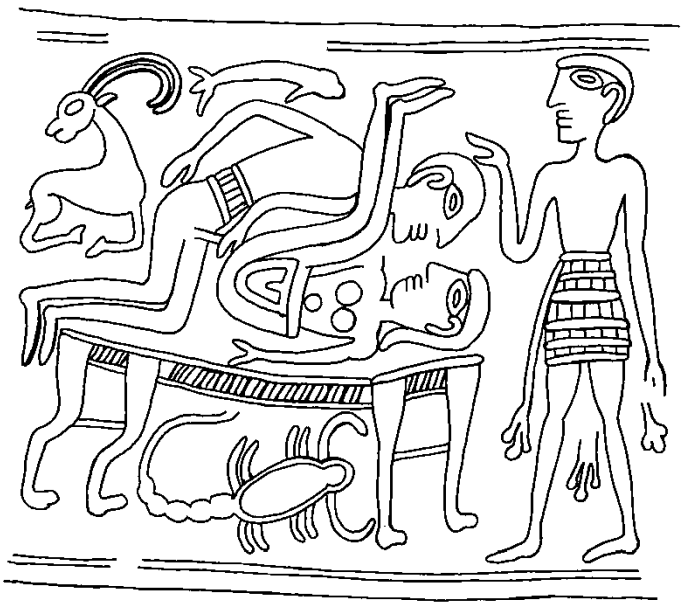

Fig. 32. Cylinder seal from Latakia (Cyprus), Middle Syrian period (copyright: Seminar for Old Testament and Biblical Archaeology, drawing: N. Klostermann).

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# "The eyes have it and the benign smile" The Iconography of Emotions in the Ancient Near East: From Gestures to Facial Expressions?[1]

Izak (Sakkie) CORNELIUS

## *1. Introduction*

The so-called "Sumerian drinking song" expresses the joy of consuming beer: "I feel wonderful, my heart full of joy".[2] Visual sources depict people at banquets consuming alcohol (Selz 1983; Romano 2015), but the exhilaration cannot be easily discerned on their faces.

Were such emotions expressed visually in ancient Near Eastern iconography, and if so, which emotions were depicted? Selected case studies from the corpus of Western Asian and Egyptian material will be included in this contribution, although the differences between the sources from these two regions should be kept in mind.

Emotions form part of our daily lives and this has been true of humans throughout the ages. For this reason emotions are also expressed in art.[3] Darwin studied the expression of emotions in humans and animals – a pioneering, but a more biological approach (1872). However, emotions are both the products of nature and nurture; they are evolutionary and culturally constructed (cf. Prinz 2004b: 1).

Part of the problem is defining what is meant by emotions (see most recently Kruger 2015: 398ff.). Here one has to work not only with disciplines such as psychology and neurology, but also sociology and anthropology. Psychologists still differ about the definitions and the listing of all the different types of emotions (Ekman & Friesen 1975; Ekman 1999; especially Prinz 2004a and 2004b). There are more words for emotions than there are emotions (Ekman 1999: 56). This problem with terminology also applies to the ancient world. The "Big Six" are usually given as happiness, sadness, fear, surprise, anger and disgust. But Prinz (2004a and b) argued that the matter is more complex. Emotions are more than feelings and they involve

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[2] http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.5.5.a#; cf. Mander 2003-2004: 1-2.

[3] There are classics like "The Laughing Cavalier" (Hals), "Weeping Man" (van Gogh), "The Scream" (Munch), "Weeping Woman" (Picasso).

physiological changes in the body. According to psychologists emotions are embodied and have physical effects.[4] You can smile because you are happy, but also because you are confused or embarrassed, or spiteful (Schadenfreude). Part of the problem is that some emotions might overlap; for example, "awe" includes fear but also fascination. "Love" can be caring motherly love or unbridled carnal lust. "Jealousy" involves anger, fear, sadness, and disgust (Prinz 2004b: 10). Emotions can blend, creating a different or a new emotion. Moreover, the expression of emotions differs from culture to culture – for example, showing emotions in Italy will differ from doing so in Japan.

The same problem applies and in fact gets even worse when one tries to understand the emotions of ancient times, such as those of the people of the ancient Near East. There is always a danger that one can read 21st-century Western perceptions of emotions such as romantic love into the ancient sources (Tarlow 2000: 719, 720).

Tarlow (2000) dealt with emotion and archaeology (also important for definitions and approaches to the issue). For the ancient Greek world there is the volume *Unveiling Emotions* (edited by Chaniotis 2012) with a methodological article by Masséglia (2012; cf. also Schneider 2009).

As far as the study of emotions in the ancient Near Eastern cultures is concerned, an overview of the literature is impossible, although there are studies such as the classic book by Gruber (1980), but these are more limited to the textual sources. Important in a general sense is the volume edited by Nitschke et al. (2009), with chapters by Zgoll & Lämmerhirt and Schroer & Staubli on Mesopotamia (cf. Jaques 2006, 2011; also Steinert 2012) and the biblical world respectively. For ancient Egypt there is a dissertation by Rueda (2003) on the heart (the centre of the emotions as in many other cultures), which also deals with the theory and the definition of emotions. In Egyptian hieroglyphs determinatives indicate emotions: e.g. A2 for love and D19 for anger. Schroer & Staubli deal in their books *Körpersymbolik* (1998) and *Menschenbilder* (2014: 157ff.) with emotions and also include illustrations (cf. 2007). Zwickel (2012 and in this volume) wrote on the iconography of emotions, the only study devoted to the theme.

Although Gilgameš cried like a woman over Enkidu (George 2003: 654f.), king Kirta in the Ugaritic epic cried himself to sleep (Hallo 1997: 333; Niehr 2015: 242-243) and Aššurbanipal cried to Ištar (Zgoll & Lämmerhirt 2009: 459-460), the iconographical sources do not show kings crying. Can one even *imagine* an Assyrian king crying? There are also no *portraits* in the true sense of the word (Winter 2009 and Keel in this volume). The same applies to Egypt, where the pharaoh becomes sad (Simpson 2003: 21, 76).

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[4] E.g. https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/body-sense/201204/emotional-and-physical-pain-activate-similar-brain-regions.

Deities also show emotions when they get angry or cry like Ereškigal and the god Anu, who laughed at Adapa (Hallo 1997: 387 and 449); the goddess cries in the Mesopotamian laments (Zgoll & Lämmerhirt 2009: 455).

In the Egyptian *Contendings of Horus and Seth* the sun god was furious, and saddened, and so Hathor exposed her private parts and her father the sun god laughed at her (Simpson 2003: 93-94; cf. Morris 2007). He can also be filled with lust (Manniche 2001: 481). The goddesses Isis and Nephtys are the wailing goddesses par excellence. Visually Isis, with the hieroglyph of her name on her head, is shown mourning her husband (Louvre Department of Egyptian Antiquities N 4130 = cf. IPIAO #800).

Texts describe emotions, but as far as the Mesopotamian visual imagery is concerned, Nunn argued: "Natürlich hat es Emotionen gegeben, sie wurden aber nicht in den Gesichtszügen gezeigt. Ein kurzer Blick reicht, um festzustellen, dass die Gesichtsausdrücke aller abgebildeten Götter und Menschen gleich sind: kein Lachen, keine Freude, keine Bekundung von Bewunderung oder Staunen, kein Weinen, keine Angstgefühle, keine Trauer" (2009: 134-135). Berlejung (2007: 54) draws a similar conclusion: "Auf individualisierende Gesichtszüge legte man weder bei Menschen- noch Götterdarstellungen besonderen Wert."

The same applies to the Egyptian sources. The father of the study of Egyptian art, Schäfer already argued that "the eyes themselves never show emotion" (1986: 291).[5] Simpson (1978: 22) was equally clear on this:

> These tendencies underline a significant feature of Egyptian art: a commitment to representing and explaining things as they should be or must be ideally, as opposed to the impressions of a fleeting moment or the recording of emotions. Serenity and seriousness of purpose characterize the faces, and one looks in vain for traces of laughter or agony. In carved relief and in tomb painting there is a certain amount of characterization: the wailing and distraught professional mourners following the funeral procession, the gnarled herdsman, the joyful dancers, the famine-stricken enemies, the outlandish physiognomy, physique and costume of foreigners, and even the suffering of wounded animals in the hunting scenes. Yet in all these cases the emphasis is on the explicative gestures of the figures rather than on facial features and emotions.

A stela containing the personal testimonial of an Egyptian artist named Irtisen (stela Louvre C14) contains the words: "I know … frightening the face of the guarded foreigners" (Barta 1970: 107). However, Barta is sceptical: "niemals lassen sich starke Gefühlsregungen, die zwangsläufig eine bestimmte Mimik oder Gebärde verlangen würden, ablesen" (1970: 114).

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[5] In the earlier German edition 1922: 241 he has "… fast nie".

The question is therefore: are there emotions expressed in the visual sources, viz. iconography? Most iconographical sources depict kings and they were not supposed to show emotions, but convey power (Karlsson 2016).[6]

Another problem is that what looks like an emotion might only be an artistic style – for example, the way the eyes are depicted. Sometimes the find context is known, but it is more difficult to know who made the depiction or for which audience;[7] sometimes it is only the (modern) observers who express emotions when viewing these images.[8] So the whole method of iconography and *reading* images should be addressed. But as shown by Verbovsek (2015: 141-142) with regard to theories of emotional appreciation in the study of art (e.g. Funch 1997: 133-137, 270-271), art evokes emotions in the beholder, but artwork can also be an expression of emotions.

## *2. Gestures and Emotions*

Zwickel (2012: 2 and in this volume) argues that emotions are expressed by gestures/Gestik, as does Nunn: "Nicht Portrait oder Gesichtszüge drücken Emotionen aus, sondern äußere Merkmale, unter ihnen Haltungen und Gestik" (2009: 135). The same is true of Egypt.[9]

Gestures include body parts and body movements which might express emotions. This will be the first group of sources to be discussed; after that the attention will move to facial features, which is the most difficult and daring part. It has to be kept in mind that there are fewer sources for the region of the Levant.

There is no detailed monograph on gestures in Western Asian iconography;[10] for Egypt there are articles by Altenmüller (1977: "Gefühlsbewegungen") and Müller for the Old Kingdom (1937) and the detailed study by Dominicus (1994) on the Old and Middle Kingdom.

First emotions and body gestures will be discussed. Zwickel (2012 and in this volume) collected the relevant sources, which will serve as point of departure. This article will expand on the material he collected. As in Zwickel's contribution, attention will be devoted to four basic emotions – joy, mourning, fear/despair, love/sympathy – and their visual representations.

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6 As shown by Schneider (2009: 547, Abb. 4 and 577-579, Abb. 24), the politician Pericles does not smile and in the official portraits of the presidents of the USA they are shown smiling only from Nixon onwards. See Keel in this volume.

7 On art and communication see Suter 2000: 1ff. and Orthmann 2008.

8 Cf. Zwickel 2012: 3 on images evoking emotions in the people who see them.

9 Cf. Simpson 1978: 22 cited earlier on Egypt and Wilkinson 2001: 21. The Egyptologist Müller 1937: 57 wrote with regard to gestures: "durch *die ein beseelter Organismus seine innere Vorgänge unwillkürlich oder willkürlich kundgibt*". In a study on gestures in the classical world Sittl already devoted attention to emotions (1890).

10 Cf. Langdon 1919; Keel 1974; Cifarelli 1998; Bonatz 2002; Choksy 2002.

*2.1. Joy*

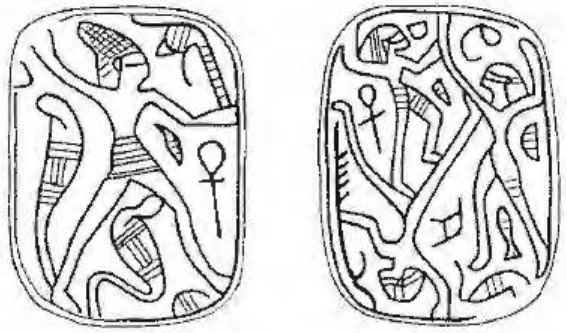

Fig. 1. Steatite plaque, ca. 1700-1550 BCE, with victorious weather god and people dancing with joy, purchased in Israel (IPIAO #486).

In ancient Egypt joy is usually expressed by joyful movements like dancing (cf. Meyer-Dietrich 2009) which was inspired by emotion and accompanied by music (Dominicus 1994: 167ff.). One can also refer here to the Egyptian hieroglyph A28. Hermann (1963) studied this gesture: *Jubel bei der Audienz*.

For the Levant there is a seal impression from northern Syria showing a seated ruler/deity with music and acrobatic dancing (Schroer & Staubli 2009: Abb. 8) and a seal-amulet (IPIAO #486 = Fig. 1; Staubli & Schroer 2014: Abb. 22g) with people dancing with joy when the victorious weather god appears; they even do somersaults.[11] On other seal-amulets there might be erotic acts involved (cf. Keel 1996: Abb. 15-17). An ivory from Megiddo shows a musician and a dancing girl in Egyptian style (Schroer & Staubli 2009: Abb. 13).

In Mesopotamian art there are also scenes of joyful festivities with dancing and music (Collon 2003). The images mentioned of banquets surely included expressions of joy and one can almost imagine and hear the laughter, although the faces do not show smiles. Scenes of musicians show women and men clapping (Keel 1980b: Tf. XXVII; Suter 2000: 194, figs. 19c, 19e), which also could have involved joy.

[11] For the sake of convenience reference is made to illustrations in easily accessible collections like IPIAO and other sources.

*2.2. Mourning*

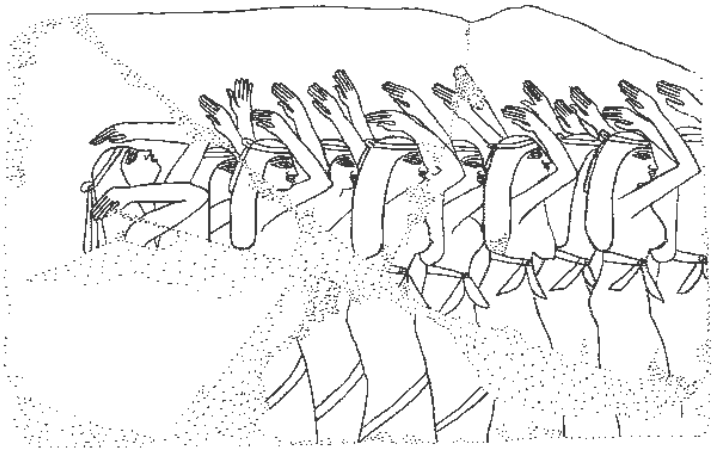

Fig. 2. Egyptian mourners from tomb of Nespekashuti in Thebes (TT 312), 26th Dyn. (650-630 BCE), New York (Schroer 2011: Abb. 2).

Mourning is well known from ancient Egypt (Müller 1937: 111ff. and the monograph by Werbrouck 1938; Dominicus 1994: 58ff.) and often shown on wall paintings.[12] The hair is loosened, the breasts are revealed, some are tearing their hair in bereavement, they throw dust on their heads, have their hands on their heads, some are overcome by sadness and sitting hunched on the ground.[13] The scenes depict a ritual; they are exaggerated to show lamenting emotions. A relief from the 26th dynasty (NY Brooklyn Museum 52.131.3 = Tiradritti 2004: 117; Schroer 2011: Abb. 2 = Fig. 2) shows a group with convulsive movements. "The drama and emotion of this scene are unparalleled among the art of its time" (Tiradritti 2004: 117). Emotions are also present on the papyrus of Hunefer (IPIAO #802) and there are even wooden statues, clay figurines (Keel 2008: Abb. 70 = Schroer 2011: Abb. 1) and amulets of the mourning Isis (Millward 2012) as well as scenes on painted coffins (Rehm 2004: Abb. 49, 55-57). Schroer studied the iconographical sources, but is sceptical about the emotions involved: "nicht weibliche Emotionalität, sondern weibliche Ritualverantwortung" (2011: 91). Millward (2012: 1-2) is more positive in this regard and Meskell

[12] E.g. the tomb of Userhet TT 51 = Keel 1980b: Abb. 76 and 428; the tomb of Ramose TT 55 = Davies 1941: 25, Pls. XXIV-XXV and TT 181 = Davies 1925: 37ff., Pls. XIX-XXII; Leclant 1980: Abb. 82-86.

[13] In the Hebrew Bible mourners sit on the ground as in Job 1:20, 2:12 and Lam. 1:1, 2:10, as is the case with the god Ilu in Ugarit (cf. Cornelius 2009: 253-255); on mourning cf. Anderson 1991; Pham 1999; Staubli & Schroer 2014: 182-185. Schroer & Staubli 2007: 45: "Gefühle, die sich im Bauch somatisieren".

(2002: 189-193) argues that in texts emotionality was not prized, but she talks of "emotive dances", and refers to a relief that "attempts to show emotion", while "baring of the breasts was a sign of emotional distress".

Mourning is more typical of emotion expressed by women: "Die Klage ist in der Ikonographie dominant weiblich" (Staubli & Schroer 2014: 183), but men are also depicted as mourning (Vandersleyen 1975: Abb. 301).

Kings do not cry, but there is a rare case from Amarna where the royal couple mourns over the death of a daughter, the king supporting his wife by holding her hand (Keel 1980b: Abb. 68a). There is also mourning in the tomb of Huya, who was an officer of queen Tiye (Davies 1905: 16-17, Pls. XXII-XXIII).[14]

On scenes of cities besieged by the pharaoh a woman also laments with her hands on her head (Keel 1980a: Abb. 132a). Schroer (2011: 95-96, Abb. 3; cf. Bonatz in this volume p. 69, Figs. 7 and 8) argues that Assyrian war reliefs pre-eminently show women lamenting on the walls, as they are in despair.

Levantine sources show the female mourners on the Ahiram sarcophagus (Rehm 2004: 49-51; Zwickel 2012 and in this volume p. 109, Fig. 6), including clay figurines (Dothan 1982: 239, fig. 10). A clay anthropoid coffin from Lachish shows the Egyptian wailing goddesses Isis and Nephtys (Dothan 1982: 276-277, fig. 15; IPIAO #799).

### *2.3. Despair/fear*

The stele of Irtisen mentioned above also refers to the "cringing of the solitary captive" (Barta 1970: 107). Strawn (2014) has recently dealt with the *iconography of fear* and included smiting scenes from Egypt and adoration.[15] Cringing enemies are shown when the pharaoh smites the foreign enemy (Hall 1986), but the king shows *no facial* aggression nor is there any fear/despair on the *face* of the enemy. Strawn (2014: 117ff.) also includes material from the Levant.

Zwickel included examples of the subjugated person lifting a hand as a sign of hopelessness (2012 and in this volume pp. 111-113, Figs. 11-14). One can add here the rebel Gaumata on the Behistun relief of the Achaemenid king Darius I, with arms raised as an act of pleading (Garrison 2009: 15, fig. 15 = Fig. 3).

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[14] Davies 1925: 39n2 wrote on the Ramesside model of mourning.

[15] The German word *Ehrfurcht* (awe) includes an element of fear (a basic emotion); on this motif in Egyptian art see Müller 1937: 90ff. and Dominicus 1994: 5ff.

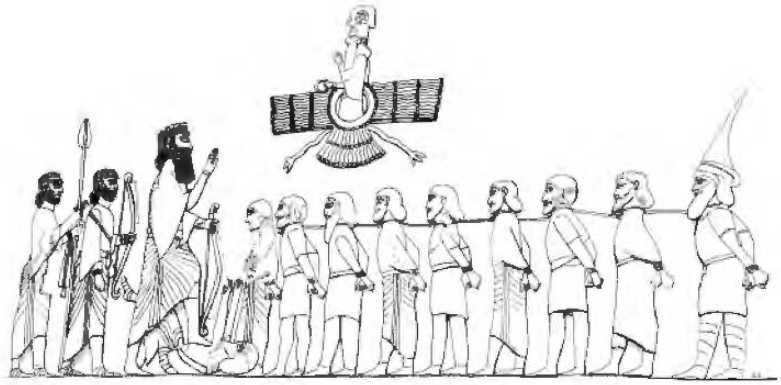

Fig. 3. Gaumata on the Behistun relief of Darius I ca. 522-486 BCE (Garrison 2009: 15, fig. 15).

Despair might be shown by the famous starving group of nomads (Zwickel 2012 and in this volume p. 113, Fig. 15). Their situation is so hopeless that they eat their own lice.

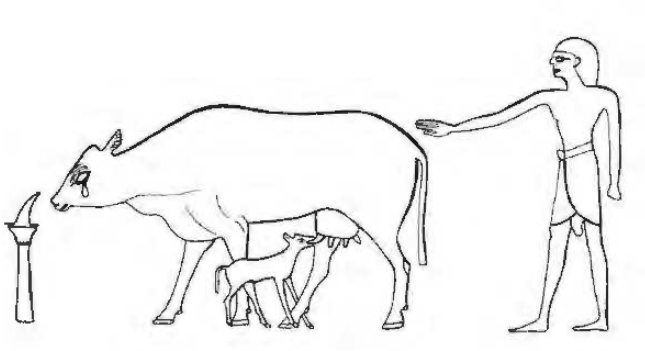

Fig. 4. Crying cow and calf from limestone coffin relief, tomb at Deir el-Bahari ca. 2046-1995 BCE Cairo CG 47267 (IPIAO #306).

According to Zwickel, animals in despair or fear might cry (2012: 14-15; figs. 18-19 and in this volume pp. 102, 115, Figs. 18-19). In Egypt, the relationship between cow and calf is shown (Keel 1980a: 46ff.). For example, on a relief on the sarcophagus of Kawit, wife of Mentuhotep, a cow might be shedding a tear (Keel 1980a: 48 with Abb. 6; Tiradritti 2004: 45); there is a similar example from Deir el-Bahari (IPIAO #306 = Fig. 4). The hippos in a hunting scene (Zwickel 2012 and in this volume p. 115, Fig. 18) might be showing fear, but they are also angry.

Turning to Mesopotamia, the slain dying lioness in the hunt of Aššurbanipal (Barnett 1976: Pl. XIII) shows pain, but presumably also anger or

fear? On the Persepolis Apadana reliefs there is a lioness "clearly enraged to the point of great ferocity, she turns her snarling face around to monitor her two babies in the clutches of the last two ambassadors … Of all the animal gifts ... this is the only set that depicts an emotive narrative" (Root 2002: 200).

All these sources might indicate that human emotions are not normally represented by facial expressions, whereas it might be the case with animals (see similar conclusions of Zwickel and Lippke in this volume).

### *2.4. Love or affection*

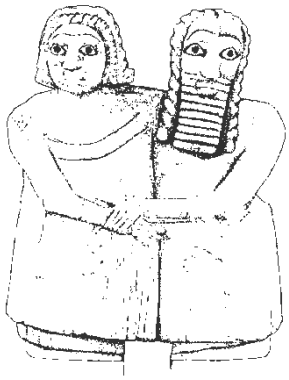

Fig. 5. Sumerian limestone statue of a couple from Nippur ca. 2650-2550 BCE, Iraq Museum Baghdad excavation number 7N161, unknown museum number (IPIAO #200).

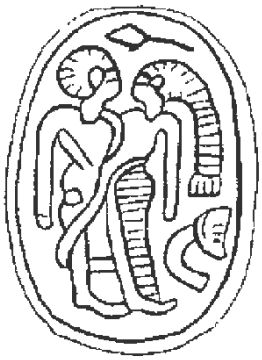

Fig. 6. Steatite scarab from Megiddo tomb of ruler and lady ca. 17th cent. BCE, Rockefeller Museum Jerusalem IAA 39-844 (IPIAO #505).

Lovers are shown in physical contact as on the ivory from Ugarit (IPIAO #957) or countless statues of Egyptian couples (Robins 1997: 73).

Turning to Mesopotamian sources, there is a very charming Sumerian statue of a couple from Nippur (IPIAO #200 = fig. 5; Marchesi & Marchetti 2011: Pl. 8A; Evans 2012: fig. 68). Another couple (headless) is from Mari (Aleppo 10104 = Margueron 2004: 281-282, fig. 268; Evans 2012: fig. 71). Parrot described them as "the 'Embracing Couple' … flesh-and-blood beings moved by passions like our own" (1960: 128, #157).[16] Evans wrote a very important book on early Mesopotamian sculptures, but warned against reading romantic love or marital bliss into what is merely a "collective dedication" including a *female* hand gesture (2012: 198-199 with fig. 70). These examples illustrate the problem stated at the beginning of this paper:

[16] Cf. Kohlmeyer & Strommenger 1982: 75: "… umarmt sich liebevoll".

one should be careful not to read modern perceptions of emotions (like 21st-century romantic love) into the ancient artefacts.

But perhaps the embracing couples represent not only dedication to the gods, but are also expressing devotedness *to each other*, shown by the closeness of the couple.

Then there is *divine love*, studied by Ornan (2010), and represented by two examples: a Syrian cylinder seal (IPIAO #503) and a terracotta with Ningirsu and Bau as a couple (Louvre AO 58).

Rulers might be without emotions, but on a scarab from Megiddo a ruler – wearing a garment with thick borders – is shown in close contact with his lady (IPIAO #505 = Fig. 6). More explicitly erotic material such as the Turin Egyptian erotic papyrus (Omlin 1973), the Babylonian terracottas (IPIAO ##494, 496, 504) and a couple in bed (Schroer & Staubli 2009: Abb. 5) could be included. A problem is ascertaining whether these scenes merely represent sexual activity or the emotion "love". Meskell (2002: 127) seems to argue that the ancient Egyptians were not so different with regard to romantic love.[17] With regard to Mesopotamia, Bahrani (2001: 53) argued that the people of Mesopotamia "believed sex to be a direct expression of love".

Depictions of the care and motherly love for children are known (Schwyn 2006), although no facial emotion is shown and these images are stereotypes in a male world. Mothers usually feed children or interact with them. A famous scene from Amarna shows the loving family with Akhenaten kissing his daughter (Zwickel 2012 and in this volume p. 117, Fig. 24), and another relief shows Nefertete kissing her daughter (Schroer & Staubli 1998: Abb. 57). A couple reflects a "sense of intimacy" (Tiradritti 2004: 78) and a statue shows the king kissing a female seated on his lap (Tiradritti 2004: 83). The problem is that Amarna art is so enigmatic and unique that it does not represent the rule with regard to the visual representation of emotions.

One can conclude that in light of the examples discussed above, emotions could be depicted using gestures.

## *3. Emotions and Facial Expressions*

A Greek figure (Schneider 2009: Abb. 15) depicts a laughing actor, the laughing being indicated not only by the face but by the whole body. However, no example of this is found anywhere in the ancient Near East. What about a laughing face? This section will attempt to take a step forward and enter more dangerous waters by revisiting the *possibility* that *facial* features

[17] Cf. in this regard the Ramesside love songs and on "love as emotion" Fox 1985: 322ff. and Watterson 2013: 51; although Moers 2010: 689 emphasises the fictional character of these songs.

could express some emotions. The face is after all often considered a window to the soul (Masséglia 2012: 134). In our contemporary world one is used to emoticons/emojis when communicating with others.[18] In comics emotions are also expressed, especially by the eyes as in Anime iconography or other popular culture icons.

Darwin (1872) already studied the facial expressions of humans and animals. Important in this regard is the work of psychologist Paul Ekman, already mentioned above, on emotions with regard to facial expressions. He identified seven basic emotions or what he calls *universal* expressions: happiness, surprise, sadness, anger, fear, contempt and disgust. Happiness is physically expressed by a smile, by flexing the muscles at the side of the mouth, plus contraction of the muscles at the corner of the eyes.[19] Sadness again is indicated by drooping eyelids and a slight pulling down of the corners of the mouth.

For this reason attention will now be devoted to images representing the eyes, the mouth, and the nose.

### *3.1. Eyes*

Eyes are messengers of love (Keel 1994: 71), but looks can kill. The gaze is something dynamic. What about the ancient Near East? Sometimes the eyes of statues are quite prominent. The rock crystal eyes of the statue of the Egyptian Rahotep (Russmann 1989: 18-19) were intended to last for eternity and to show *he is alive*, whereas the closed eyes of a defeated enemy show he is dead (Nelson 1929: 32; 1931: 15).[20] A blind harpist has closed eyes as in the tomb of Nakht (Davies 1917: Pl. XVII). This is also the case with the lady made of ivory from Kamid el-Loz and an ivory face (Hachmann 1983: cover, 88, 90, 111, 118). These examples indicate that ancient artists had the skill to represent the eyes quite vividly and even depict blindness. Are there then any examples of the eyes indicating emotions?

The Egyptian mourning scenes mentioned above show women with tears in their eyes and eye makeup running down their cheeks (Davies 1941: 25, Pls. XXIV-XXV = Fig. 7).

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[18] Emoticons are totally different from, for example, the signs in Egyptian hieroglyphs (cf. http://www.eloquentpeasant.com/2015/06/02/emojis-vs-hieroglyphs/).

[19] As shown by Schneider 2009: Abb. 1.

[20] On the eyes in Egyptian art see Schäfer 1986: 290ff.

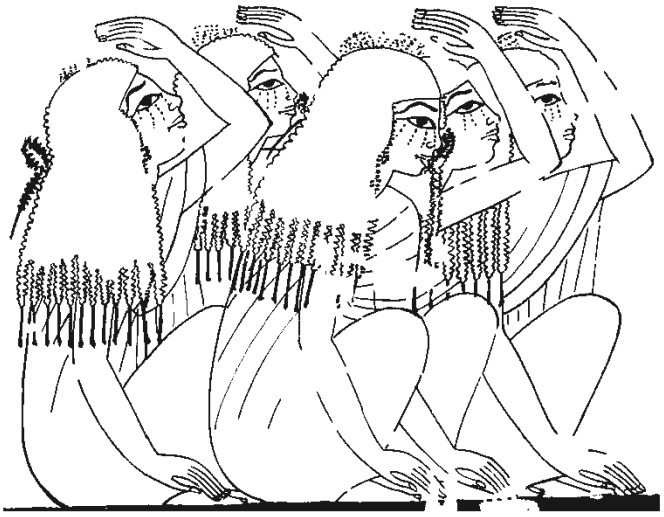

Fig. 7. Egyptian mourners with tears from tomb of vizier Ramose (TT55, Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, Theban Necropolis) ca. 1411-1375 BCE (Davies 1941: Pl. XXIV).

In Western Asian art there are artefacts with prominent eyes, as inlays or painted. Neolithic skulls and statue heads from Jericho and Ain Ghazal were modelled with eyes of shell (IPIAO ##38-40). These were publicly exhibited to be observed (IPIAO 54, Abb. 8). The shells used for eyes make them appear to be alive, although the exact function and meaning are debatable (cf. Cauvin 2002: 108-115).

The enigmatic "eye-idols" from Tell Brak (IPIAO #196[21]) might be representations of worshippers observing the divine in the temple. Wall paintings from Munbaqa show figures with raised hands and enormous eyes (Machule et al. 1986: Abb. 10).

But the most impressive examples are statues from Tell Asmar (IPIAO ##198-99 = Fig. 8) with eyes with enormous pupils. Frankfort (1939: 15, Pls. 1-6) had already reflected on the superhuman sized eyes as the centre of the composition. Jacobsen (1989) talked of the alluring eyes of the gods. Both Frankfort and Jacobsen identified these statues as deities (Jacobsen 1976: 128 and 1989 = Ninurta), but most recent interpretations (Marchesi & Marchetti 2011: 140-141) opt for these being royal statues that were standing in the presence of the divine. Kramer (1968: 4) has already noted that "huge eyes symbolizing awed adoration … served busy worshippers as stand-ins". Winter (2000: 36) understood the enlarged eyes of Early Dynastic sculpture as the manifestation of an enhanced response to an awe-inspiring divinity, a visible marker of affect. Or as in IPIAO I: 296: "schaut

[21] See also Frankfort 1949.

mit großen Augen erwartungsvoll auf die Gottheit", and recently Staubli & Schroer (2014: Abb. 31a-b): "erfreuen sich an ihrem Segen." So the statues have enormous eyes maybe indicating the emotion of awe expressed by the worshipper in the presence of the deity.

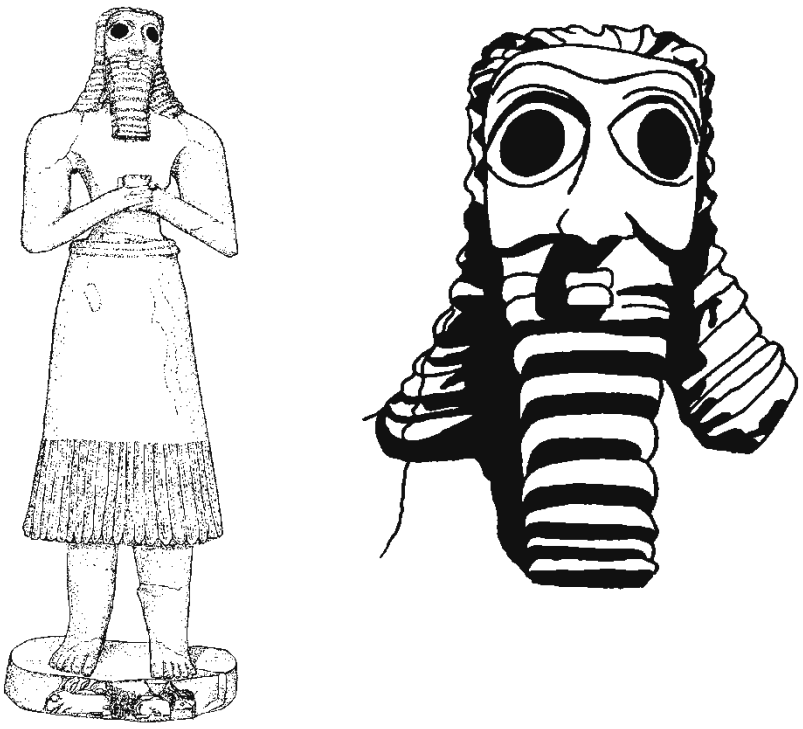

Fig. 8. Gypsum statue from Tell Asmar ca. 2650-2550, Iraq Museum Baghdad 19752 (IPIAO #199) and close-up of face (drawing by Renate van Dijk-Coombes from Frankfort 1939: Pl. 3).

Selz (2004: 194-195) argued that their bug-eyed appearance, often with dilated pupils, does not only reflect their "religious attentiveness" as shown by the scholars cited above, but may even be a sign of ecstasy and heightened awareness following the consumption of drugs and alcohol, a very practical interpretation of the large eyes. He does refer to the use of drugs and the fact that the figures are often holding cups.

In spite of the fact that huge eyes are typical of the period and its artistic style, it is argued that these are worshippers and that the unnatural size emphasises the eyes for some reason and might reflect the emotion of awe in observing the deity. This interpretation differs from that of Evans (2012: 107), who is sceptical about interpreting the eyes "as a reflection of the human body with its physiological functions and the human mind with its

emotional responses". There is more to it than style; the eyes form the centre of the composition – in the words of Winter (2000): "The eyes have it."

Looking at material from the Levant, the first case study comes from Sahem in Jordan, published by Fischer (1997: 63, 126 = fig. 23, 165 = Pl. 32), who compares two ladies and then argues: "the one has a smiling almost euphoric face, the other a mixture of melancholy, responsibility and satisfaction". So according to him there are two different moods or emotions depicted.

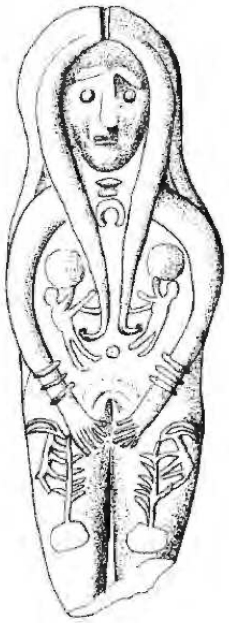

Fig. 9. Terracotta plaque figurine from Revadim near Ekron ca. 1250 BCE, Jerusalem Israel Museum IAA 82-219 (IPIAO #828).

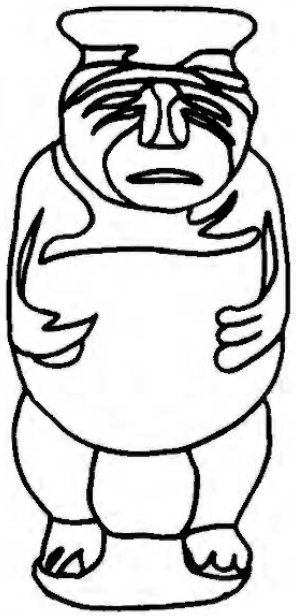

Fig. 10. Albaster Egyptian "Gravidenflasche", Tübingen 967 (drawing by Magna Cornelius from Brunner-Traut 1970: Tafel 1).

The next case study is perhaps of greater importance. Ornan (2007) studied a terracotta plaque from Revadim (IPIAO #828 = Fig. 9) – there are two other fragments, but these unfortunately show only the lower part of the body.[22] She wrote:

> In the context of the non-realistic affinities of ancient Near Eastern imagery, the unique expressiveness of the woman's face on the plaque from Revadim demands an explanation. Indeed, the agonizing properties conveyed through

[22] Another fragment with two babies was found at Tel Burna (Shai 2015: 30).

> the above noted down-curving eyebrows, lower lip, and the vertical ridges flanking the nose, may seem as a realistic portrayal of a woman in pain. However, since this facial countenance was also probably applied on the other two fragments, which were made in the same mould, I would regard this exceptional appearance as a conventionalized, generic expression for displaying a woman in a state of anxiety and distress. (223)

Ornan also refers to Egyptian objects (Brunner-Traut 1970 = Fig. 10) which might represent a woman experiencing the pain of childbirth as indicated by the same downward slanting eyes. These are alabaster vessels with oil for pregnant women linked to the goddess Taweret. The face of the mortal woman is "ausdrucksvoll," and "die Augengruben geben dem Antlitz etwas Leidvolles" (Brunner-Traut 1970: 36). The pain is clear on these objects. Does the Revadim lady (presumably an amulet for childbirth) with the slanting eyebrows perhaps show labour pangs, emotions of pain, anxiety and distress? The problem is that what looks like an "emotion" in the eyes of the terracottas might just be accidental, the end result when the clay figurine was taken from the mould.[23]

### *3.2. The smile*

When looking at the smile as an emotional expression, one must surely refer to the Mona Lisa of Leonardo da Vinci with its enigmatic, "benign smile" (someone has even argued she shows signs of high cholesterol[24]). Turning to the ancient Near East there is an exceptional ivory from Nimrud, the so-called "Mona Lisa of Nimrud", as she has been called because of her similarly enigmatic smile (Pusch 1979: 33 = Fig. 11). In contrast is another ivory head, called the "Ugly Sister" with her austere face and a thin slit for a mouth (Mallowan 1966: I: 122ff., Pl. II, fig. 71; McCall 2008: 68, fig. 9-h, 226, fig. 27-b).

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[23] As shown by Tadmor 1982: 157n15 with regard to the presumed "lion-faced" items from Tell Massad (near Beisan) published by Rachmani 1959: 184-185, Pl. XXIV: 1-3. Cf. also the figurines from Beisan (Rowe 1940: Pl. LXVIII:3), from Tel Harasim (Cornelius 2004: 54, Pl. 5.55b) and Tell Zerā'a (Vieweger & Häser 2007: 14-15, Abb. 10). Another comparison is not a terracotta plaque, but a bronze statuette from Tell Abu el-Kharaz. The excavator Fischer described the face as that of a cat or lion, possibly related to Sekhmet or Bastet (1996; cf. IPIAO #914). However, as shown by Uehlinger (1997: 114), the figure wears a short kilt, which makes it male. He also argued that the face is merely "a somewhat blurred execution".

[24] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8444202.stm.

Fig. 11. “Mona Lisa of Nimrud”, ivory from a well in chamber NN of the North-West Palace of Ashurnasirpal II at Nimrud, Iraq Museum Baghdad, ca. 8th cent. BCE (Pusch 1979: 330).

Parrot argued that in later Sumerian statues the smile became more prominent (1960: 110, cf. fig. 140). Even Elamite heads might have a grinning expression, according to Alvarez-Mon (2005: 117).

Fig. 12. Neolithic limestone mask from Duma near Hebron, ca. 8000 BCE, Israel Museum Jerusalem IMJ 82.2.71 (IPIAO #41).

Fig. 13. Terracotta mask of Humbaba, Mesopotamia ca. 18th cent. BCE, BIBEL+ORIENT Museum Fribourg VFig 2006.7 (Staubli & Schroer 2014: Abb. 29b).

Depictions of smiling/grinning faces might even go back to very early stone “masks” 9,000 years ago in the southern Levant (IPIAO ##41-42 = Fig. 12; Hershman 2014). These masks resemble skulls and were presumably used as part of some ritual. But they still look both friendly and scary.

There are also clay masks with the grin of the monster Humbaba showing its teeth (Staubli & Schroer 2014: Abb. 29b = Fig. 13; cf. Carter 1987). Zgoll & Lämmerhirt (2009: 452) mentioned this as the only piece of iconographic evidence for laughing (Baghdad M 65622 = Ascalone 2007: 152). From a mask in the British Museum with an inscription it can be argued that the artefact served a divinatory purpose (Ornan 2010: 235-236).[25] Showing the teeth with "Lachfalten" is typical of a grin. Phoenician masks have what has been called a "sardonic smile" (Aubet 2001: 248-249; Ciasca 2001: 411-412 and Mazza 2001: 649).

The figurine on the shard from Ramat Rahel (Cornelius 2015) has been described as showing a slight smile, which Geva (1981: 188) ascribed to Greek influence.

Egyptian statues also have slight smiles, as some examples show. Thutmose III has a slight smile (Tiradritti 2004: 65). A head of Amenhotep III (BM EA7 = Tiradritti 2004: 75) has the lower lip curving "in a perfect shallow arc up to the open corners of the mouth, to produce the effect of a slight smile".[26]

Amarna art has already been described as unique and enigmatic. This is also clear on some statues of Akhenaten with their slanting eyes (more than only hieroglyphs) and grinning lips (Romano et al. 1979: 113-115, 120-121). In his *ushabtis* he is shown in a more simplified way (Tiradritti 2004: 83). The Third Intermediate Period statue of Meres-Amen (Tiradritti 2004: 111) has a slight smile.

It could be argued that hidden behind these smiling/grinning faces might be something tending in the direction of emotional expression. This reminds one of what is found in early Greek art (Schneider 2009: Abb. 7-9).

Moving from smiling faces, there is the "pessimistic" face of Sesostris III with its grim expression (Aldred 1970: 43-45). Is this realistic, or only a specific trope of kingship (Berman 1996; Winter 2009: 259n12), the deeply concerned ruler? Or is this a naturalistic representation of sadness (Myśliwiec 2002: 234), another example of a possible emotion?

### *3.3. The nose*

The last part of the face to be dealt with is the nose, which is sometimes prominent in ancient Near Eastern art.[27] Neolithic heads have round eyes

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[25] An example from Kish has cut-out eyes which indicate it was worn as a mask (Carter 1987: 362). For a giant Humbaba see Amiet 1977: fig. 441 and Howard-Carter 1983.

[26] From the BM online: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=111468&partId=1&searchText=EA+7+Amenhotep&page=1.

[27] Schroer & Staubli 2007: 46, Abb. 2 = Staubli & Schroer 2014: Abb. 25b discuss the stela of Esarhaddon from Zincirli with regard to the nose, but this is a ring through the *lips* and not the nose (Ornan 2007: 62, fig. 2).

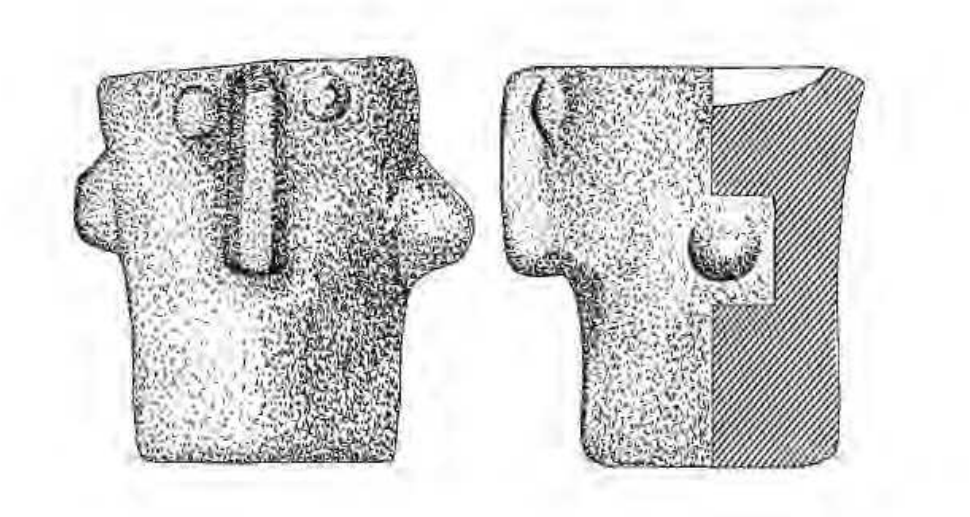

Fig. 14. Basalt figurine from the Golan ca. 4000-3600 BCE, Jerusalem IAA 87-6932 (IPIAO #82).

and large noses (IPIAO ##43-44), and the much later clay figurines from Horvat Qitmit have large noses (Beck 1995: fig. 3).

A group of 35 Chalcolithic-period figurines (37 cm high, average 25 cm) are cylindrical, slightly bi-conically shaped and come from an area extending from northern Jordan up to the Upper Jordan Valley and the Golan Heights. They are made of basalt, hard to work with, but locally found. These have exaggeratedly large noses (ca. 8 cm), eyes, ears but no clear mouth, some might have beards (male figurines?) and even horns (deities or animals?). The top of the head is slightly hollowed out, creating a depression or bowl (2 cm deep, diameter 17.5 cm) – presumably to hold offerings (IPIAO ##82-83 = Fig. 14). They have been called pillar figurines because of their shape, or household altars because of the bowl on top. The objects were found in nearly every house, sometimes more than one. One was found on a pedestal facing the door. Epstein (1975, 1978, 1988, 1998) called them pillar figurines and more specifically household idols, associated with family religion to ensure fertility of the fields and flocks. Mazar (1992: 80) called these "personified fertility divinities". Beck (2002: 225-227) disagreed and talked of altars for offerings. Ibrahim & Mittmann (1998) argued these are not human heads, but stylized animal representations, referring to other material in the form of a bull and a ram (IPIAO #48). However, the animal horns are longer and the head tilted, and the noses are not all that prominent. These heads are rather human. Ossuaries, with human faces on the front (IPIAO #78-81) and prominent noses (and eyes and mouths) make for better comparative material. Even ivory figurines have large noses (Epstein 1978: Pl. IV; IPIAO #74). So these figurines could have been household altars representing an ancestor or spirit

called upon to protect the fields and flocks, and allowing an offering to be made on top. For Epstein the nose is a symbol of life, the breath of life (1978: 23). Uehlinger (2004: 89) states that the nose in the Semitic languages is not primarily a respiratory organ, but a means by which *anger* is expressed. So the spirits had to be pacified by offerings, the effect of pacifying obtained by offering agreeably smelling substances.

This is a rare example, but only included here to show that there might be more emotions "hidden" somewhere in the iconographic record.

## *4. Conclusions*

It seems there is some consensus that emotions were expressed through body movements and gestures such as joy, sadness, fear and love. There are joyful movements and festivities (Fig. 1) visually expressing the emotion of joy. Sadness as an emotion is especially shown in scenes of mourning (Fig. 2). The rituals were performed by paid mourners, but nevertheless included emotions. Fear is especially expressed by the defeated enemy (Fig. 3). In animals there is a combination of fear and pain (Fig. 4). Love is shown by couples in an embrace (Figs. 5-6), as well as in depictions of mother and child.

With facial features the issue becomes more difficult. Zwickel concluded: "But it was very unusual and out of order to present emotions on the faces of human beings, at least when they were of official status" (2012: 23 and in this volume p. 105). This view is also expressed by Simpson with regard to Egypt and Nunn as far as Mesopotamia is concerned (see citations above).

However, in spite of the fact that Egyptian art is idealised, working with roles and stereotypes and not usually representing portraits as is also true of Mesopotamian art, there might be exceptions. There are examples from early Egyptian art which are more realistic, like the famous statues of Hemiunu, Sheikh Beled and the dwarf Seneb with his family (Tiradritti 2004: 6, 33, 34), not to mention the unique depictions in Amarna art.

In the light of the sources depicting slanting eyes in pain, huge eyes in awe, happy smiling mouths and perhaps large angry noses, it is argued that there is more than meets the eye.

Eyes are shown with tears in scenes of sadness (Fig. 7) and are huge to indicate prominence as well as adoration and awe (Fig. 8). Egyptian vessels show the pain of childbirth (Fig. 10), but it is unclear whether this is the case with the Levantine terracotta plaques (Fig. 9).

Mouths with smiles might indicate a positive attitude of friendliness (Fig. 11), but a grin is more cynical (Fig. 13). If the nose is a means to express anger, this emotion might also be depicted in the images (Fig. 14).

Meaning is in the eye of the beholder as much as in the artist's/artisan's original intent and this might be especially true when one searches for emo-

tions in the visual material of the ancient Near East. The beholder in the past may have seen the same thing as the beholder in the present – or something completely different. Pictorial representation is, after all, a deeply personal experience evoking different emotions in different people.

It is hypothesised that the examples studied do not depict the emotions of individuals, but rather stereotypes and roles. However, some of these might depict an emotion whether by eyes with tears, a slight smile or enlarged eyes. One should not view/judge ancient Near Eastern iconography through 21st-century Western eyes and experiences, but it might be argued that the basic emotions have not changed across time and cultures (Ekman), as can be seen here, however fleetingly.

So it is argued that perhaps there are *some* faces depicting some *sort* of emotion. At the very least there might be *tendencies* towards the representation of emotions in the visual material of the ancient Near East. This is the possibility that was explored. In the end more questions than answers remain which only an in-depth discussion and detailed analysis of the available sources might resolve. Any such study should be mindful of the complexity of the hypotheses surrounding the portrayal of emotion in the art of the ancient Near East.

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# Kulturelle Rollen – keine Gefühle!
# Eine Response zu Izak Cornelius

Silvia SCHROER

Izak Cornelius hat in seinem materialreichen Referat als Vertreterin der Ansicht mehrerer Generationen von AltorientalistInnen – und übrigens auch ÄgyptologInnen – zur Darstellung von Emotionen in der altorientalischen Kunst Astrid Nunn[1] zitiert. Grundsätzlich schließe ich mich diesem Mainstream an. Es ist m.E. nicht nachzuweisen und höchst unwahrscheinlich, dass die vorhellenistische altorientalische Kunst die Darstellung von Emotionen intendierte. Da Izak Cornelius sehr differenziert und mit Beispielen gearbeitet hat, sehe ich mich nicht zur Gegenrede provoziert, sondern höchstens zu einigen Akzentuierungen und Ergänzungen, wobei ich zwei Gedanken etwas thesenartig heraushebe.

*1. These: Bilder, die beispielsweise klagende oder tanzende Menschen zeigen, stellen nicht die Emotionen als solche, z.B. Traurigkeit, Kummer, Freude dar, sondern immer den konventionsgesteuerten, kulturellen Umgang mit ihnen oder ihren kulturellen Ausdruck. Bei der Klage sind dies oft Rituale im Kontext von Bestattungen oder großen Katastrophen wie Städteeroberungen, bei der Freude beispielsweise Tanz und Bankett, nicht selten in einem kultischen Rahmen.*

Die Unterscheidung ist von Bedeutung: Wir reden nicht über die Affekte, die biologisch verankert sind. Nicht die innere Befindlichkeit von Menschen wird als solche und um ihrer selbst willen dargestellt, sondern es geht um den geformten, in kulturelle Bräuche eingebetteten Umgang mit Gefühlen oder mit Situationen, in denen diese sehr stark sind.

Zur Verdeutlichung greife ich das Beispiel der Klage (vgl. dazu Schroer 2002; 2009; 2011) insbesondere in der ägyptischen Ikonographie auf. Im Neuen Reich gibt es in den Gräbern eine Fülle von farbigen Malereien mit Darstellungen von Trauernden, oft Frauen in Gruppen (Werbrouck 1938). Auf ihren lehmverschmierten Gesichtern sind Tränen, manchmal sogar blutige Striemen erkennbar, die Haare sind aufgelöst, die Kleider zerrissen, die Gesten deuten Verzweiflung an, indem die Frauen sich die Haare raufen, auf die Brust schlagen, sich krümmen oder zu Boden fallen (Abb. 1 = AOBPs 428). Solche Darstellungen rühren uns an, und man wird kaum

[1] Vgl. den Beitrag von Cornelius 125.

bestreiten können, dass hier Emotionen im Spiel sind. Und trotzdem intendieren diese Bilder nicht die Wiedergabe der Gefühle um ihrer selbst willen, sondern sie interessieren sich für das Ritual. Es geht nicht um Individuen, sondern um gesellschaftlich festgelegte Rollen. Natürlich gibt es normalerweise einen Zusammenhang von Emotion und Ritual, er kann aber auch fehlen. Die Klagefrauen beispielsweise, die in Scharen an den Bestattungsfeierlichkeiten auftraten, müssen nicht persönlich betroffen gewesen sein. Sie verhalten sich aber, wie es erwartet wird, sie führen die üblichen Klagegesten aus und wahrscheinlich schreien sie konventionsgemäß laut. Damit drücken sie aus, was das Kollektiv erfährt und empfindet und animieren zum gemeinsamen Klagen (vgl. Jer 9,17-22). Aber wieviel Emotion im Spiel ist, wissen wir eigentlich nicht. Die Darstellung von vielen Klagenden bezeugt bzw. will davon überzeugen, dass der Verstorbene eine wichtige und beliebte Person war, dass man ihn ehrenvoll und *rite* bestattet hat, sodass er einen sicheren Weg in die andere Welt hinüber gehen konnte. Die performative Funktion solcher Bilder ist dabei besonders wichtig.

Nehmen wir ein anderes Beispiel aus dem Bereich der altorientalischen Kunst. Paardarstellungen der altbabylonischen Terrakottakunst, aber auch auf altsyrischen Rollsiegeln und einigen Stempelsiegeln (Abb. 2 = IPIAO 2, No 505) betonen Intimität und Zuneigung zwischen Mann und Frau. Gewiss sind sie, insbesondere wenn die Partner nackt sind, erotisch. Eros hat immer mit Gefühlen zu tun, während Sex nicht notwendig etwas und oft wohl gar nichts mit Liebe zu tun hat. Emotionen sind also bei Paaren sicher im Spiel, aber wie sind sie eingeordnet? Paardarstellungen wirken auf uns selbstverständlich „emotional", wir erkennen in ihnen Verliebtheit und Zärtlichkeit. Es kann aber sein, dass sie im antiken Kontext stärker Loyalität und Verbundenheit als die Affekte zum Ausdruck bringen sollten oder dass ihre Darstellung einen magisch-beschwörenden Zweck hatte. Die fliegende Taube, die bei einer Bankettszene zwischen den Partnern fliegt (Abb. 3 = IPIAO 2, No 498), stellt eine besondere Qualifikation der Beziehung als erotischer Beziehung dar. Soweit ich sehe, ist dies die einzige deutlich symbolische Manifestation einer affektiven Zuwendung. Die Taube ist als Attributtier der Liebesgöttinnen traditionell, auch wenn die Göttin selbst im Bild nicht erscheint, ein Symbol erotischer Liebe. In der Sprache des Hohenlieds (1,15; 4,1; vgl. 5,12) ist die Metapher „deine Blicke sind Tauben" nicht von den Gefühlen und dem Ausdruck des Verliebtseins zu trennen.[2] Die Liebeslieder des Hohenlieds und die Darstellungen auf Rollsiegeln und anderen Bildträgern haben dennoch nicht dieselben Intentionen. Wenn Mann und Frau bei Bankettszenen aus demselben Gefäß trinken oder sich zuprosten, dann ist in der diskreten Verschlüsselung dieser Kunst auch die Vorfreude auf das geschlechtliche Zusammensein impliziert. Dargestellt sind jedoch keine verliebten Individuen, sondern Typen und Rollen,

[2] Vgl. Keel 1984: bes. 53-62.

oft mythisch aufgeladen. Die Gefühle als solche sind dabei wohl kaum von primärem Interesse, wohl aber die Kraft und Auswirkung der erotischen Beziehung von Mann und Frau.

Ein drittes Beispiel ist eine Art Gegenprobe. Ein Bereich, in welchem sich – nach unseren Erfahrungen und Annahmen – sehr viel Emotionalität abspielt, ist die Mutterliebe. Mutter-Kind-Darstellungen sind aber vor der Perserzeit in der altorientalischen Kunst zum einen überhaupt auffällig selten und zum anderen in keiner Weise gefühlsbetont. Es gibt Bilder mit stillenden Müttern oder Müttern mit Kleinkindern auf dem Arm, aber die Mutterliebe liegt im Nähren, Halten oder Tragen des – vermutlich männlichen – Säuglings allein, nie werden durch Gesten oder die Physiognomie, z.B. das Anschauen, Gefühle hervorgehoben. Wahrscheinlich ist das Interesse dieser Bilder ganz auf die Mutter und ihren Status fokussiert, wobei Mutter und Kind eine starke Einheit bilden.

### *2. These: Mimik ist in der altorientalischen Kunst inexistent.*

Unsere Smiley-Gesellschaft ist es, wie Izak Cornelius zu Recht unterstreicht, gewöhnt, Emotion und Affekt sehr unmittelbar mit Gesichtern und der Physiognomie zum Ausdruck zu bringen. Das ist allerdings eine relativ junge Entwicklung. Die Hochzeitsfotos meiner Großeltern und sogar meiner Eltern sind noch von einem unerschütterlichen Ernst im Gesichtsausdruck, ganz unabhängig vom an sich freudigen Anlass. Altorientalische Kunst verzichtet auf die Mimik, so möchte ich hartnäckig behaupten, vollständig. Sie greift zur Gestik und zur Kontextdarstellung, um verschiedene Emotionen in den Blick zu rücken. Manche Affekte, z.B. Wut, werden wohl gar nicht dargestellt, möglicherweise sogar aus Besorgnis, dass etwas Dargestelltes „wirksam“ werden könnte. Die Angst der Feinde, wenn sie niedergeschlagen oder gefangengenommen werden, drückt sich nicht in ihren Gesichtern aus, sondern in den abwehrenden oder verehrend erhobenen Händen.

Dabei war man durchaus fähig, Physiognomie darzustellen, zumindest konnten ägyptische Kunsthandwerker die Gesichter von Nubiern und anderen Völkern als „afrikanisch“ kennzeichnen. In der Amarna-Zeit ist die Verfeinerung der Gesichtsdarstellungen sehr weit fortgeschritten. Man hätte von den künstlerischen Anforderungen her wohl auch ein bekümmertes und ein lachendes Gesicht darstellen können, wollte das aber anscheinend nicht.[3] Die ägyptische Plastik hat allerdings im Bereich der Königs-

[3] Wildung (1975: 259) vermutete, dass manche Hathorsistren bzw. Stelen, auf denen solche zu sehen sind, die Hathor als grimmige „Herrin des Schreckens“ zeigen, doch ließe sich der Beweis dafür wohl nur durch ein deutliches Nebeneinander oder den Wechsel von freundlichen und zornigen Hathorgesichtern oder sonst durch besondere Namensbeischriften zur Göttin erbringen.

porträts, wohl unter Einfluss des großen Interesses an einer exakten physischen Erhaltung des Körpers im Totenkult, den Schritt vom Rollenporträt zum Individualporträt getan.[4] Frontal dargestellte Gesichter spielen insbesondere in der Ikonographie der Göttinnen eine bedeutende Rolle. Ohne dass Mimik im Spiel wäre, ist die Zuwendung des Gesichts zum Betrachter oder der Betrachterin als solche, d.h. als Geste, Ausdruck von Freundlichkeit und Wohlwollen (Staubli/Schroer 2014: 196-198). Die Gesichter der zahlreichen Säulenfigürchen oder der ägyptischen Hathorkapitelle wirken auf uns freundlich, aber ein Lächeln, wie es in der griechischen Skulpturenkunst anzutreffen ist, gibt es nicht.[5] Unsere sozialen Konditionierungen und Betrachtungsgewohnheiten spielen uns beim Betrachten solcher Artefakte häufig einen Streich. Es täuscht, wenn Gesichter als schmerzverzerrt oder böse blickend empfunden werden. Tallay Ornans Vorschlag der Deutung des Figürchens von Revadim (Ornan 2007), auf den Izak Cornelius Bezug nimmt,[6] geht in die Irre, was die Darstellung von Geburtsängsten oder -schmerzen betrifft. Eine Zwillingsgeburt war in der Antike und noch bis vor wenigen Jahrzehnten auch hierzulande unvorhersehbar. Geburtsschmerzen waren kein Thema der antiken Kunst, nur die Hilfe der Hebammen beim Gebären wird beispielsweise in der zyprischen Koroplastik dargestellt. Das Figürchen von Revadim stellt eine „Mutter alles Lebendigen" dar, eine Göttin, die das Gedeihen der Pflanzen, Tiere und Kinder, also die ganze Fruchtbarkeit des Lebens schützt und fördert.[7] Was immer sich – in unserer Wahrnehmung – in ihrem Gesicht spiegelt, es war höchstwahrscheinlich vom Kunsthandwerker gar nicht intendiert.

Die Frage, die sich stellt und die schwer zu beantworten ist, bleibt die nach dem Grund für das eklatante Desinteresse der gesamten altorientalischen Kunst an menschlichen Emotionen und Mimik. Möglicherweise müssen wir es schlicht akzeptieren, dass die Agenda der Bilder eine andere ist als die Agenda der Texte[8] und dass es starke künstlerische Konventionen gibt, die trotz sich wandelnder Kontexte und Möglichkeiten unverändert bleiben. In diesem Zusammenhang ist bisweilen der Vergleich mit der Tierwelt von Interesse,[9] weil hier leicht abweichende Konventionen zu beobachten sind. Um die Angriffsbereitschaft eines Stieres darzustellen, wird dieser in der darstellenden Kunst bereits seit den Monolithen des Göbekli Tepe in der Türkei (10./9. Jahrtausend v. Chr.) mit gesenktem Kopf dargestellt. Bei Löwen ist der aufgerissene Rachen ein Mittel, um sie als hochge-

4 Vgl. zur Unterscheidung den Beitrag von Keel 27-54.
5 Was dieses Lächeln, das keineswegs die Norm der Porträtkunst aller Epochen darstellt, ausdrücken soll, ist allerdings auch nicht klar. Wahrscheinlich soll es eine Lebenshaltung andeuten, wohl kaum eine Stimmung.
6 Vgl. den Beitrag von Cornelius 136.
7 Vgl. Keel/Schroer [3]2010.
8 Vgl. dazu die Beiträge in Schroer [ed.] 2006.
9 Vgl. den Beitrag von Lippke 165-168.

fährliche Tiere zu charakterisieren, die Betrachtenden sehen die furchterregenden Zähne und hören gleichsam das Brüllen.[10] Die Körperhaltung von Tieren kann, auch wenn sie nicht bei der Jagd oder im Kampf dargestellt sind, etwas Inneres unmittelbar nach außen vermitteln. Menschen werden in der Kunst mit anderen Mitteln, meistens Posen und Gesten, als aggressiv, gefährlich oder verängstigt dargestellt. In den biblischen Texten hingegen kommt die Mimik und Körperhaltung stärker zum Tragen. Sie kennen in Verbindung mit den Augen, die gesenkt oder gehoben sind, ein ganzes Spektrum von Emotionen und Befindlichkeiten, ob Niedergeschlagenheit, Hoffnung, Erwartung, Eifersucht oder Mordlust (Schroer/Staubli $^{2}$2005: bes. 70-78). Texte erwiesen sich als geeignet, um menschliche Depression, Wut oder Freude körpersymbolisch auch mit Bezug auf die Mimik auszudrücken. Die Kunst verzichtet darauf und beschränkt sich stattdessen auf die konventionelle Darstellung von Gesten der Klage, Dominanz, Freude.

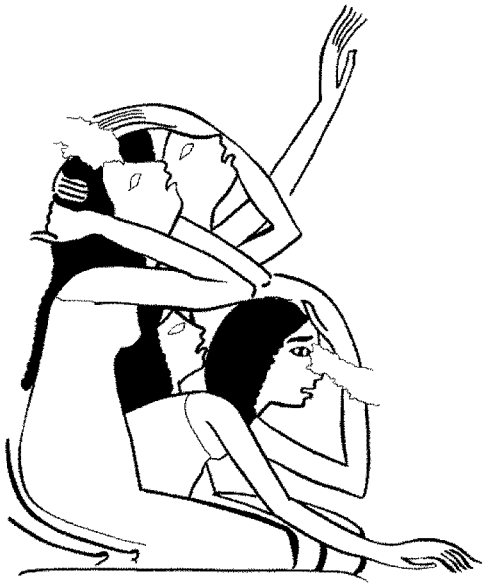

Abb. 1 Grabmalerei aus Abd el Qurna, Grab des Userhet (Nr. 51), 19. Dyn. (1345–1200a); Keel $^{5}$1996: Abb. 428; Mekhitarian 1954: 135.

[10] Die erwähnte Stierdarstellung findet sich in IPIAO 1, No 10; die Löwendarstellungen in IPIAO 1, No 9.

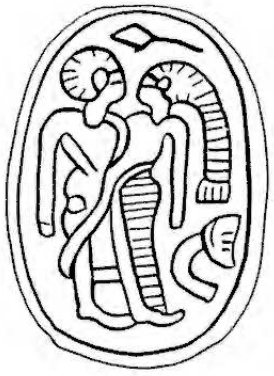

Abb. 2 Igel-Skaraboid aus Megiddo, Tell el-Mutesellim, 1. Hälfte des 17. Jh.a; Schroer 2008: Abb. 505; Keel/Uehlinger [5]2001: Abb. 43; Winter [2]1987: Abb. 376; Loud et al. 1948: Pl. 149,52.

Abb. 3 Altsyrisches Rollsiegel aus dem Handel (Syrien oder N-Mesopotamien, 1850–1720a; Schroer 2008: Abb. 498; Winter [2]1987: Abb. 248; Keel 1984: Abb. 49; Przeworski 1926: 172 Abb. 1.

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# Part 2

# Comparative Methodology, Linguistics and Art Historical Analyses: Theoretical Reflections on Visualizing Emotions

# Analyzing "Emotions" in Ancient Media: Between Skepticism and Conceptual Autonomy ("Eigenbegrifflichkeit")

Florian LIPPKE

*This article was originally presented as an academic response to the contributions by D. Bonatz and I. Cornelius (present volume). The intention is to add contextualizing arguments to the discussion. There is disagreement about whether emotions are depicted in ancient iconographic sources or not. Currently, the majority of scholars prefers the terms gestures and habitualized actions (that do not convey emotions?) as labels for a given image. Consequently, following this argumentation one might assume: No emotions at all were depicted in ancient art. Against this position, it is possible to achieve productive results – that may depict emotions – by taking non-human emotions into account. Furthermore – as a general corrective – the model of* Eigenbegrifflichkeit *(B. Landsberger, engl. conceptual autonomy) is presented and integrated. The present paper argues for a strong skepticism considering depiction of emotions and especially their precise labelling. At the same time, it opts for broadening the iconographic data set in order to gain a deeper understanding of emotive constellations in the ancient world. However, anachronistic fallacies have to be avoided.*

## *1. Introduction*

When discussing ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian media in prehellenistic epochs,[1] it is clear that many of our modern presuppositions cannot be taken for granted as a valid basis for a historic and hence critical interpretation.[2] Considering works of art from our modern 21st century routines of

[1] See Uehlinger 2005 for an overview, as well as Frevel 2005 with worthwhile introductory remarks, furthermore Uehlinger 2001; for further aspects see Keel & Uehlinger [6]2010: 453 passim; Schroer & Lippke 2014: 313; Lippke 2014: 21.26; Lippke 2015: 82 recently de Hulster, Strawn & Bonfiglio 2015 as well as Keel & Schroer 2005; Schroer 2008; 2011, for the basic material data.

[2] Anachronisms occur in the course of textual exegesis and iconographic interpretation alike. They are very often present in the course of literary or redactional criticism, e.g. when a diachronic hypothesis of text genesis is presented. In many of these cases the underlying method is not text-analyses / exegesis but merely deserves the label "Rezeptionsästhetik". Antique and Oriental / Egyptian documents in text and image deserve to

perception can even prevent adequate analysis when, for example, modes of depiction (aspective[3], perspective or mixed rendering) are not taken properly into account. The same is true with respect to iconographic content: Unable to identify the basic iconemes, numerous interpreters of ancient art made wrong decisions that – in consequence – resulted in misleading statements in all subsequent steps of method (iconographic analysis, iconologic interpretation, see in this respect Panofsky's scheme of the three-part subject matter[4]). To lack familiarity with the reference of basic iconemes in iconographic sources can be just as problematic as not having learned the vocabulary of a new language that one would like to master.[5]

One could formulate a long list of well-known misinterpretations. For example, André Parrot identified the bird in the Mari wall paintings[6] (Fig. 1.2) – which is obviously a dove (Fig. 3.4) – as a bee-eater (*merops apiaster,* Fig. 5), and therefore missed the broader, symbolic context of the Ishtar cult.[7] Irmtraut Beste[8] identified and described a "date palm" on a scarab seal (Fig. 6.7, now in Hannover's Kestner Museum), which should actually be identified as an image of a winged Baal-Seth (Fig. 8.9) and with the typical head type of the Egyptian Seth (Fig. 10-12). This interpretation stands when one accounts for similar Levantine iconography. Another misinterpretation concerned ivory inlays that were characterized as "Hyksos Horses"[9] (Fig. 13), but which upon proper placement and reconstruction depict (Fig. 14-16) clear yet fragmentary attestations of the daemon *tȝ-wrt* in upright position (see Fig. 17-20). Misinterpretations of Egyptian chariot horses as unicorns and Bes icons interpreted as bovine figures round out a colorful set of examples.[10] However, these misconceptions do not result from the interpreters' negligence – they arise when accessible knowledge

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be treated in their own antique communication processes. Labels taken from modern discussion are to be avoided. Basic parameters in literary and iconographic communication may continue (for literary features see Hardmeier 2003; 2004), but the modern understanding of literature and images is not simply to be projected over three millennia of cultural history.

3 Schäfer [4]1963; Brunner-Traut 1975; 1990; Keel [5]1996: 333; Schroer & Lippke 2014: 314.343; Lippke 2011: 213.

4 Panofsky 1939: 5-15; de Hulster, Strawn & Bonfiglio 2015: 36-38.42.

5 However, the problem remains with respect to a vicious circle since identifying an iconem adequately would also include having understood the context in which it is used. Similar problems occur in philology and archaeology in a comparable way (for the philological impact see 4.).

6 See Parrot 1958: 61; Keel 1992: 149.

7 Silvia Schroer has identified the scenario of the Ishtar temple as one of the major keys to the symbolic symbol system(s) of the Middle Bronze age (Schroer 2008), but has also plausibly argued for an impact of this constellation on Iron Age finds (Schroer 2007).

8 Beste 1979: II 167; Keel 1990: 303-305.

9 Petrie 1931: 9; Ory 1945: 39; Weippert 1988: 244-245; Keel 1993; Schroer 2008: 90-91.

10 See for a detailed discussion of the case studies Lippke (in preparation) in "prior knowledge".

of the natural and cultural sphere as well as knowledge about style are not integrated in a proper manner. A question of method obviously arises at this point.[11]

These observations concerning appropriate interpretations are also true when it comes to more complex levels of analysis. If one assumes that "emotions" play a central role in imagery in ancient artistic traditions, one might then search for a corresponding emotion in each and every iconographic document.[12] It is important – as Phillip Lasater has argued elsewhere[13] – to stress the time-dependent character of many interpretations: A romantic concept of antiquity is often in danger of producing romantic, emotionally over-emphasized reconstructions of past symbol systems in which the "emotional" content of artistic products tends to be overemphasized as well.[14] To search for a corresponding emotion in each and every image has to be regarded as a problematic approach to ancient images: Not every source has to contain an "emotion,"[15] nor is the triggering of emotion clearly part of an image's intent (in terms of pragmatic aspects).[16] Brent Strawn has recently illustrated just how ambivalent such a search for emotions in two interrelated studies on "fear" in textual and iconographic sources can be.[17]

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11 The methodological discussion is not well documented when it comes to Levantine Iconography. Especially focusing the realm of the Biblical World and its relationship to the Hebrew Bible there is an academic lack of an applicable method; see however the latest approach by de Hulster, Strawn & Bonfiglio 2015, which offer a broad variety of selected case studies. The method – present between the lines – is clearly dependent on Keel's early approaches (!) on illustration / illumination of the Biblical background. However a clear-cut method is not found in Hulster, Stawn & Bonfiglio.

12 The underlying question would then be, "Which emotion is presented with this particular image?"

13 Lasater forthcoming.

14 See Donner 1997 for an evaluation of the romantic ideas on desert motifs.

15 Of course there are depictions which lack (from artistic rendering) any sort of "emotional expression"; however, in later steps one has to take into account which emotions should be affected with a certain image for a particular recipient (viewer). This is of course not a question of inherent emotive elements within an image but more a question of pragmatic effect. As a consequence, pragmatics must play an important role for an appropriate understanding. Again it must be stated that this effect could have been planned when creating a piece of art – but this is for the moment hard to prove with the methods in use and no reflecting literature on the process of crafting for early antique epochs (see 4. and 5.).

16 The simple appearance of a motive / iconem is not at the same time to be equated with the "domination" of a motive within a complex constellation of iconems. It is possible – via structural analyzes – to trace central themes and side aspects on many preserved complex iconographic attestations. Furthermore, a central topic can – from a pragmatic viewpoint – overlap and dominate other side constellations.

17 Strawn 2014; 2015. The following part of the present article can also be read as a critical evaluation of these contributions. I thank the participants of the seminar "Text- und Bildwelten erschliessen" (2015 Zurich) for discussing the numerous implications.

A central question is, which label should be applied to a given iconographic rendering?[18] Considering Strawn's presentation, one can already formulate an initial critique: Since there are many cognates of "fear" it is hard to link an image exclusively to one single lexeme.[19] A second critique is the question of whether all 52 images that Strawn presents indeed express the idea (even better with Lasater: the concept) of fear. It is clear when conjecturing about the "feelings of one agent within an image" (the surrendering foe, the smitten enemy) one *could* imagine assigning "fear" to the mix of emotion in what is depicted. Clear evidence, however, is lacking. Moreover, in nearly all attestations, the scope of all compositions (see later 4.) is not identical with the "surrendering / suffering / fearing" agent: The main topic of many presented attestations is focused on the glorious victory of the Pharaoh / King / Hero and has to take this Pharaoh-centrality (as the dominating ruler!) into proper account.[20] Fear in these examples is a side aspect and freely assigned to the intention of the whole composition, although when all levels of interpretation are considered, the main focus should be labeled "the winner and his historic-theological propaganda of victory."[21] Further problems arise in Strawn's presentation when adoration scenes[22] are depicted in order to explain the "emotion of fear." It is true that we know the interdependence of fear and adoring (*fascinosum et tremendum*[23]). But from the iconographic analysis of the given objects, this idea would not have come to mind. There is nearly no iconographic rendering of fear clearly identifiable as such in the ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian traditions.

In other words: It is possible to categorize the whole set of images presented by Strawn into a few categories like "cultic" or "ritual-propagan-

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18 Because there is no co-evidence of written and iconographic attestation for the above mentioned fear, it is difficult to prove definitively that a lexeme stands for a certain iconem. These co-evident cases are in general seldom. Cornelius, with his volumes on divine iconography 1994; 2008, has in a way the same problems to face. The iconographic attestation of gods and goddesses do not often bear names. A similar problem arises in ethno-archaeological contexts when the designation of a certain tool has to be discussed. Often this is only possible when instruments and tools are labeled. I am grateful to Dr. Nesina Grütter, Basel, for pointing out this aspect with spindle-objects from the Levant and the corresponding word pair *pilakkum* | *plk*. The parallel question would be, "What evidence can we take into account that an iconem and the hypothetically corresponding word form a matching pair in the (material and ideal) world in antiquity?"

19 I am indebted to my college and friend Phillip Lasater, Zurich, who in the course of his research on the concept of fear pointed to the polysemy of fear in the Hebrew Bible and the different semantic options within the North-West Semitic substrate.

20 See for this constellation Keel 1975 and Keel (forthcoming) on problems in iconography.

21 Strawn 2014: fig. 1.2.5.6-8.10.11.16-18.27-30.32.35.43-52 among others.

22 Strawn 2014: fig. 2.9.12-13.19-22.42 among others.

23 Already present with Otto 1917 (1950) and since then ever part of the controversial discussion about chances and limits of his approach.

distic subordination," without attributing a single notion of fear. The underlying iconographic expression is far more centered on questions of world order and politics between heaven and earth. It is not the subject in a fearful situation that represents the core of all these discussed iconographic sources. This can be underlined by the lack of any individual character in the same way as one can trace the lack of nearly all individual facial features (not to be conflated with stylistic rendering!) of royal and elite depictions in Egypt and the ancient Near East in prehellenistic epochs.[24]

## *2. A position, Its Consequences and a Reevaluation*

Taking these basic aspects into account leads to a general evaluation: In ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian art there are no emotions depicted.[25] This is in a way an *opinio communis* backed – at first glance – by many observations.[26] As mentioned above, no explicit rendering of individual emotional aspects can be observed either in a positive or in a negative manner. A besieged individual's mouth and facial muscles are not rendered differently than those of the winner of a battle (Pharaoh, Assyrian king). In this respect it is absolutely plausible that most scholars emphasize the importance of gestures. Many iconographic attestations convey a gesture that answers certain questions of interdependence / relationship and not an individual's emotion. A catalog of major gestures can be provided, most clearly in the Egyptian realm. Emma Brunner-Traut[27] lists at least 12 distinct gestures: Greeting (1), pleading (2), speaking (3), pointing, designating, commanding (4), acting with music (5), cheering, exulting in victory (6), lamenting and mourning (7), magic warding (8), protecting and power transmission (9), counting (10), dancing (11) and kissing (12). Many of these basic categories are easy to differentiate from each other in iconographic sources (Fig. 21, with some examples of major types). But already with this brief list it is clear that these gestures are often connected to what we nowadays call "emotions." Accordingly, they cannot completely be interpreted without the emotional / affectual context.[28] In other words, understanding the categories discussed by Brunner-Traut requires an emotional compo-

24 See Keel in this volume.
25 See the contributions of Silvia Schroer and Dominik Bonatz, but on the other hand also the material overview by Sakkie Cornelius.
26 Compare Bonatz in the present volume.
27 Brunner-Traut 1977.
28 Any other solution would be a very one-sided perception and would therefore create a deformed scenario of cultural history; for an integration of many aspects see the interesting attempt by Snell 2011.

nent.[29] This point creates a complex situation in which the evaluation of emotions in ancient icons has to find a balanced positioning.

Already at his stage the possible solutions of interpretation, (1) "There are no emotions[30] depicted in ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian Art," and (2) "The iconographic rendering is always based on gestures which are employed to contribute to a higher message" are not satisfying at all. In the same way, appropriately understanding the intention of an iconographic source (somehow a "message" in terms of pragmatics) is not possible when the potential feelings associated with the gestures are simply neglected and put aside. However, reevaluation should be allowed in such a situation. It is therefore reasonable to hold the first introduced hypothesis ("no emotions at all") over against all accessible material. In terms of method the approach would match neatly with the thoughts of René Descartes in his *Discours de la méthode* (1637).[31] A clear-cut method would start by creating a *tabula rasa* scenario. The starting point would then be: a serious doubt considering depicted emotions. In other words, no emotions at all are depicted and there is no chance to find them in any of the ancient artworks. However, Descartes shows that there are options to find more and more certainty by consequently rethinking the whole scenario with its initial steps. It is therefore useful to start with a *tabula rasa* position for the topic "emotions in iconography." But this is not the point to stop further investigation, but rather to rethink the whole scenario. Descartes asks of course: What could be the center of the argumentation, in our case? What is the object of our method ("der Gegenstand unserer Methode")?[32] Similar thoughts can be employed in our case when we realize that all attestations for the "no-emotion-hypothesis" are deduced from exclusively anthropomorphic examples.[33]

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29 Compare for other detailed observations on connected aspects the material of Cornelius in this present volume.

30 As Lasater forthcoming discusses, there has been an ongoing confusion about terms like "emotions" "passion / affections" and "feelings". As we can learn from Lasater's analysis, one should be very careful with the term "emotions" – in fact the usage of "feelings" as neutral term as well as the attested concept of "passion / affection" is much preferable. This critical notion is also true for the usage of "emotions" in this recent paper.

31 Wohlers 2009; 2011; Recki 2005 and Husserl's reception accessible in Ströker 2012.

32 In the same respect the differentiation as well as the relationship of the three fields "object" (Gegenstand), "theory" (Theorie) and "method" (Methode) is addressed. I am grateful to Christoph Uehlinger and Izaak de Hulster for helpful comments on these interconnections.

33 Taking Husserl and Descartes into account is not identical with opting for a strict tabula rasa scenario *in terms of preconceptions*. This would of course imply severe hermeneutical problems. The present section advocates to begin with the doubting position (no emotions / feelings [fn. 30] depicted) and to check it against the iconographic material. In so doing Descartes' method is a sort guiding line. I thank Christoph Uehlinger for addressing this point in a personal conversation.

### *3. Broadening the Set of Data from "Human" to "Humanimal"*

In many discussions of whether emotions are present or not in an iconographic source, the scope is often limited to a human perspective.[34] This focus seems plausible at first glance, since the discourse on emotion / affection-analyses is mainly tackled from an anthropological perspective. Broadening the data set is, on the contrary, often labeled as an implausible transgression. Therefore the mainstream opinion has often addressed a certain suspicion against such an approach. However Janowski[35], Schroer[36], Riede[37] and Neumann-Gorsolke[38] have – as outstanding examples – opted for a broadening of the perspective, while, still not completely integrating basic "humanimal" categories in their argumentation. In a popular discourse, the German researcher Rainer Hagencord (Institute for Theological Zoology)[39] has initiated an even more progressive argumentation.

That perspectives are changing in regard to data-basis, method and theory is evident from the theological and exegetical discussions over the last decades. New directions have been taken in order to interpret "humans" as "animals that belong to the human species" (better: as humanoid animals). One could discuss this position in terms of biological classification – *kingdom*, *phylum* and *class* – as well. This change of perspectives allows one to increase a trans-species perception of the scenario (methodological transgression of species' boundaries). In the sub-discipline of moral teaching Michael Rosenberger[40] has opted for a clear perspective from human-animal studies (HAS) but focuses for the time being more on general and only slightly literature-based examples. As a remarkable exception Julia Eva Wannenmacher has summed up the actual methodological consequences of a trans-species[41] viewpoint.

Each model employed for the understanding of antique cultural mechanisms is influenced by the scientific context in which it was developed.[42]

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34 This is of course a standard situation in the theological humanities, where the worth of philosophical anthropology is emphasized and also used as a key element to categorize theological and religious thought. See the balanced presentation on biblical anthropology edited by Frevel 2010. As a strong advocate of biblical anthropology – in a positive manner – Janowski's publications on the topic could be consulted (2004; 2005; 2010; [4]2013), furthermore Schroer & Staubli 2012; 2014.

35 Janowski 1993; Janowski & Riede 1999.

36 Keel & Staubli 2001; Schroer 2010.

37 Riede 2002; 2005; 2012.

38 Janowski & Gorsolke 1993.

39 Institut für Theologische Zoologie, PTH Münster / Germany, publishing a Yearbook of theological zoology (Jahrbuch der Theologischen Zoologie).

40 Rosenberger 2015.

41 Wannenmacher uses the term *non-* or *anti-speciesism* 2015: 5.7-11.25-27.

42 Thomas Aquinas, "Quidquid recipitur ad modum recipientis recipitur", Summa Theologiae, 1a, q. 75, a. 5; 3a, q. 5, "whatever is received into something is received according to the condition of the receiver".

Anthropocentrism is for example often derived from the misconception that "man / mankind" is the crown of creation and therefore not at all comparable with other works of creation.[43]

In contemporary discourse, it is not plausible to maintain an extreme differentiation between "human" and "animal." Scholars need to reconsider the demarcation between these groups that was employed and thought of as a solid basis in anthropocentric discussions of earlier centuries.[44] The whole argumentation presented here has a clear application when the focus shifts from written to depicted sources. A separation of human and animal iconography is a position that also deserves a reevaluation. This is especially true when it comes to antique iconographic renderings in which animals were not generally considered of holding a subordinate position[45] in comparison to humans. They were even seen as more capable of the connection with the divine sphere.[46]

Considering the evidence presented so far in this article, one can admit that it is also legitimate to search for expressions of "emotions / feelings[47]" or similar patterns in iconographic sources depicting both humans and animals as the main agent in a scene.[48] This conclusion opens up a broad range of data that can be used as a basis for thorough interpretation. However, emotion / affection-like depictions in animal iconography are not a standard scenario when it comes to the ancient Near East and Egypt. There are considerably differing critical parameters. Firstly, there are not as many as the twelve physical categories employed by Brunner-Traut above. On the contrary, it would be misleading to talk about gestures! Gestures in animal iconography are very restricted. Take for example the animal iconography of the Amarna epoch in which the birds open their wings to adore the sun (Fig. 22). Gestures with animals are almost exclusively spotted in cultic contexts where they act as adorers. This is also true of monkey depictions in Egypt (baboons) adoring the sun rise with raised arm in the *dua-prayer* position (Fig. 23).[49] Other examples can hardly be called gestures at all. In

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43 Wannenmacher 2015: 2-3.

44 A change of perspective was employed. Animals are not humans, but humans can be classified as humanoid animals (see above). This is why the research field of human-animal-studies refers to human and non-human animals, a classification that connects the groups rather than separating them.

45 See for a discussion of the implications Linzey 1994: 108; Waldau 2013: 148.

46 See for the iconographic expressions the great number of animal-based symbols in Keel & Schroer 2005; Schroer 2008; 2011. For a textual evaluation next to many other attestations the text of Balaam Num 22-24 deserves a close reading.

47 C.f. Lasater fn 30.

48 Broadening the focus is a decision in the same direction as promoting a thick description (Geertz et al.), see also Lippke 2011: 211; Lippke 2013: 21 citing the result of Uehlinger, Keel, Leuenberger and others.

49 Central questions for these attestations would be as follows: Who is imitating whom? Are the animals imitating human behavior and therefore are depicted in a human way or is the image itself a metaphorical and hence theological expression according to which

other words: Striking examples for undisputed animal gestures are absent in Egyptian iconography.

Even more interesting in this case is the depiction of an iconographic attestation connected to what one might call an emotion or affection which is at the same time not explained by a typical gesture at all.[50] These examples do exist, but they are quite rare.

On the wall reliefs of certain tomb chapels (e.g. the depicted excerpt from the tomb of Ptahmoses, 19th dynasty, 1300–1200 BCE; see Fig. 24),[51] a priest is presented cutting the foreleg of a calf while the mother cow is depicted behind the cutting scene.[52] The faces of both bovines are deformed in a way that is used to depict the loud mooing / screaming as attested in certain extreme situations that are connected with fear, pain or sympathy.[53] For this relief the option to label the scene as gesture is not possible, either for the cow or for the calf. The calf is not performing a gesture that serves the whole context. Sometimes it is depicted in an unaffected manner (see accordingly Fig. 25) but the rendering here in Fig. 24 is remarkably different. For the mother cow seeing the slaughtering scene it is even an act of sympathy (suffering with another agent) sharing the pain and the fear of the young one. There is no gesture or function that could explain this correlation if emotions / feelings play no role at all. Also "attitude" seems at this very point to be an implausible option. Therefore a scene is depicted that involves a strong character of emotion / affection and even a translation of feelings. But at the same time there is no given option for shortcutting the interpretation by a mere gesture-explanation. Perhaps the wailing in the sepulchral context was thought to be imposed on the sacrificial animal. If so, then the point raised here (emotion / feeling-like patterns that play an important role in images) would even be stronger.

In other words, the goal of the depiction is not to translate the situation / gesture onto the animal but rather the objective would be a translation of the emotion present in the situation. At least it is fully plausible that the hypothesis of "no emotions / feelings are depicted at all" has to be reworked as we transgress the borders drawn by anthropocentricity. A "holistic" integration of all available data can sensitize us for rare but relevant occurrences

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animals also praise the deities? These questions with all their nuance are not so easily answered. Antique text from Egypt would even document a priestly ritual imitating the voices of baboons in order to raise the sun each morning (oral comment by Joachim F. Quack, Heidelberg for the Egyptian "Book of the Temple" with its rituals).

50 Next to the term "emotions" one could also consider the term "attitude" to be used in such cases. I thank Christoph Uehlinger for the clarification, see also fn 30.

51 See for the discussion of the motive in general Keel 1980.

52 Keel 1980: 30-32.

53 This insight is deduced by observing animals in their natural environment. A very loud and intensive mooing would also require a broad opened mouth and a tongue outstretched. I am grateful to Hilal Sezgin for commenting on my observations at several occasions.

of emotions / affections during a process of iconographic communication. In the end, the structure suggested by Descartes is fully matched. After serious doubts and rethinking the basic situation, room can be developed for a better understanding of the complexity of the analyzed situation in which no option has to be ruled out because of limited data basis or ambivalent presupposition.[54]

## *4. Labelling with Anachronisms: How to Define the Scope?*

A second substantial discussion is the question of how to label iconographic constellations in general. Some basic conclusions can already be drawn from controversial discussions on "how to name a deity." If a divine figure is only depicted (iconographic source) and not accompanied by a textual / epigraphic addendum that attributes a readable name to a scene / constellation, it is highly hypothetical to assign a random name. Thus in the act of interpretation uncertainty would rise. What do we do when we ascribe the word "fear" or "joy" to a certain relief? As Keel[55] has plausibly argued, images evince a kind of transculturalism. In other words, the image of an object, animal or human being is – within a certain frame – understood even if the language spoken by the sender and the recipient are not the same. The main question, however, is, whether this is true for the emotions / affections (or even better: for the concepts of feelings) present in an iconographic constellation. Serious concerns arise if a transculturalism of emotions / affections is used as an axiom without any further investigation. At least from the more intensive research in the linguistic and the philological realm, a shift of langue can produce a variety of severe consequences. It is already commonplace that language influences many different spheres of communication. These shifts in nuance and in elementary parameters can – in the field of philology – be discussed in different dimensions.

### *a) Within an antique time frame*

Language shifts can result in using different lexemes, different verbal structures and different syntactic solutions. As for the lexemes, apart from Hebrew epigraphy and the Hebrew Bible,[56] one would not find the verb √ʿśh,[57]

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[54] In this regard the results of this subchapter are significant: By broadening the data-set the earlier hypothesis ("no emotions / attitudes") is severely challenged. There are examples when the analysis is not restricted to the human sphere. This very restriction has to be labeled as one of the major unbalances in the earlier discussion.

[55] Keel 2002: 90.

[56] ʿśh is sometimes used for a diagnostic separation between the Hebrew und the Phoenician substrate. However, this is on the basis of scarce epigraphical data a clearly hypothetical division.

[57] Ges 18: 1018-1021, DNWSI: 890-895 and CDH VI: 569-602.

which means "to do, to create, to establish."[58] Crossing the border into the realm of the Phoenicians, this verbal nuance of "doing" or "creating" would rather be rendered with √pʿl[59]. One step onwards to the Aramean substrates and neither of the above examples would be used for that nuance but rather √ʿbd[60] would fill that connotation. In the cuneiform tradition this place is taken by *epēšum*.[61] If such a simple and frequently used word like "doing, establishing, creating" is already connected with a clear shift of meaning, then what should we expect from far more complex cases of cultural shifts, such as Egyptianizing and Syrian/Phoenician ivories[62] used in the mainland in Palestine/Israel,[63] and as far as Nimrud?[64] It is hard to label the depicted constellations on these objects, whose times of production are separated by as many as 2000 years, with the same attribute (see "b.") Other examples concern the shifts from West- to East-Semitic substrates. In such cases a clear double aspect-opposition (perfective / imperfective aspect with two options of expression as attested in Preexilic Hebrew),[65] is confronted with a much more diverse range of verbal options.[66] For syntactic aspects, translating languages with or without nominal clauses in their syntactical repertoire could be compared with finding shifts in this very respect.[67] In sum, there are many different shifting options when it comes to transcultural / translingual interferences in texts.[68] The danger is not being aware of these

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58 The German dictionaries always list "tun, machen, herstellen" as the main connotations of this verb formation.

59 Ges 18: 1066; DNWSI: 924-927 and DCH VI: 727-728. See for the usage of this verb also the Byblian inscriptions as well as the typical formula of Phoenician dedicatory inscriptions which almost all demonstrate the productive usage of √pʿl.

60 Ges 18: 1519.

61 See AHW and CAD *sub verbo*.

62 In general Barnet 1935; [2]1975; 1982; but for the francophone discussion already Decamps de Mertzenfeld 1954 and in an analytic approach Winter 1976a; 1976b; 1981; 1989a; as well as Herrmann & Millard 2003.

63 For the Northern corridor (Ugarit) Caubet 1992 and Gachet-Bizollon 2007; for the Philistine context Ben Shlomo & Dotan 2006 as well as Dotan 2006; for Samaria Crowfoot & Crowfoot 1933; 1938 and for Megiddo Loud 1939.

64 For the material collections cf. among others Herrmann 1986; 1989; 1992; 2004; 2008; 2009; 2013 but of course the earlier publications of Mallowan 1978; 1970; 1974; see also Orchard 1976; Safar & al-Iraqi 1987.

65 Blum 2008; Bauer 1910.

66 Von Soden [3]1995 as well as Gross 1976.

67 E.g. in the case of translations from Semitic languages (Phoenician / Punic) to Latin or Greek where a nominal clause cannot fit into the verbal setting without a copula (e.g. est).

68 This is especially a scenario with bilingual inscriptions such as the longest Phoenician inscription (Karatepe KAI 222), for which also a Luwian counterpart is preserved (Kutter 2008: 223-236). In this respect all bilingual attestations can offer us a glimpse of the complexity of intercultural phenomena and shifts. See also the bilingual attestations in the Mediterranean Koiné which contain Punic / Latin interchange.

changes and therefore neglecting them when dealing with images and their interpretation.

*b) Anachronistic connotations (language of the vassal treaties)*

One can also encounter problems when anachronistic connotations are integrated via translations in modern languages. The occurrence of the expression to "love" in the vassal treaties (which could of course be interpreted as a romantic expression of affection, of an emotion)[69] could trap the interpreter in a philological fallacy, inputting emotions into the Assyrian terminology. However, the original meaning is "to be obedient, to be loyal" and is in no respect linked to the modern, romantic connotations of "love."[70] This is also true when analyzing the attestations of love in the Hebrew Bible,[71] where all the verses influenced by deuteronomic language would have to be addressed separately because they imitate the usage of vassal treaty language in their terminology. In sum, searching for an emotion in ancient literature can produce a deformed and inadequate result, if basic aspects of word usage and contextualization are anachronistically disregarded.[72] The same seems to be true for the interpretation of images. Beginning with modern idioms assigned to iconographic attestations and gradually going back over three millennia is a recipe either for a complex confusion or for a dead end.

The different aporias in a) and b) cannot be simply ruled out by using a manual and acting in a compliant way. However, there are ways to minimize the dangers when looking for an appropriate interpretation. First, any discussion has to face the interconnection between text and image in theory and therefore also in the method that can be employed.[73] Text and image both contribute to the religious symbol system, both being elements of the media in antique cultures. Each can impact the other whether through misinterpretation or cautiousness. Identifying certain presuppositions plays a key role in both processes of interpretation. Two points are important in this respect. The first was already mentioned: One should identify constellations[74] in texts and images and combine the results in order to identify the

69 In general Parpola & Watanabe 1988.
70 Steymans 2003; 2006.
71 Steymans 1995.
72 Searching exclusively for the attestations of "love" in a concordance can produce completely inadequate results with neither historical nor philological outcome.
73 Lippke forthcoming b on the relationship of methodological steps such as textual criticism and quality criticism and comparable features.
74 This identification can be regarded as the basic analytical step after iconemes are identified. The relationship of elements / iconemes has a strong advantage in comparison to textual sources! Thus the constellation is a decisive aspect within the communication process of images.

underlying concept(s).[75] A focus on concepts can prevent a snapshot as the identification of single "emotions / feelings" in texts and images. The search for concepts is a stronger, broader and historically more appropriate approach than the others discussed earlier. A second, perhaps even stronger point was – according to the judgment of the present author – introduced by Benno Landsberger.[76] Its real impact is realized when juxtaposed with the first point (conceptualizing). With Landsberger we can propose a gap between antique concepts and modern concepts.[77] This would match perfectly with the aporias discussed in b). This gap can only be bridged when the producing culture's expressions are not flattened by terms used in the 21st century. This is of high importance, since an unbroken continuity of cultural systems over the past three millennia is highly questionable.[78] A central concern with respect to conceptual autonomy is that the object is the measure (Gegenstandsangepasstheit). This is in a narrow sense only possible when the original language is used.[79] Here aporia a) is addressed and taken into account. The problems of opening such a complex scenario are apparent. There is high need to solve such difficult scenarios but the data deficiency[80] is a constant and severe obstacle. There are not many sources that supply us with text and image alike in one object, nor are there many accessible sources that deal explicitly with the relationship of concepts and terms that are applied to these very concepts. Despite this disillusioning fact there is a need to promote a "conceptual turn"[81] in the research of ancient media. This conceptual turn cannot develop its full impact without the foundation stones of Landsbergers "Eigenbegrifflichkeit" (conceptual autonomy).[82]

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75 A concept can be defined as a constellation that is realized by certain textual, iconographic or archaeological attestations. For a more definite discourse, see Lasater forthcoming.

76 Landberger 1926; Sallaberger 2007; Lippke 2015.

77 Landsberger 1926: 24.

78 See Sallaberger 2007: 64-66.

79 This demand creates a substantial challenge to all literary and iconographic artefacts that are connected to more than one linguistic culture, as for example present in Zincirli where Phoenician, Samʾalian and Aramean attestations are present in a short sequence. See Tropper 1993.

80 For the literary perspective see Blum 2005: 11 and Lippke 2013: 15-16.47.

81 See also other turns like the linguistic turn (White), the anthropologic turn (Binford), the iconographic turn in biblical studies (Keel) among many others.

82 At this point the link of conceptual turn and conceptual autonomy can only be touched in a most reduced way in this present manuscript. Further research would be necessary and further attestations are to be collected for a convincing argument.

## *5. Concluding Remarks and Prospect*

We have seen that there are problems with assigning "emotions" to images in general. At the same time, there are images that cannot be understood by gestures and ritual behavior alone, but rather that also express an emotive component[83]. These attestations were traceable once the categories of included data (i.e., human / humanimal) were broadened. However, the decisive question would be whether it is generally possible to fulfil (and perceive) a gesture without an emotion woven into that gesture. While the term "emotion" probably needs a reframing as "feeling" (as Lasater did[84]) more in line with the concepts at play, the resulting problem is clear: How is one to label such feeling-related concepts once they are detected? Given the scarcity of data, no clear solution can be given at the moment. There are not enough depictions with accompanying text connected to a certain concept. However, it is clear that in the discussion of concepts that potentially convey a notion of emotion / feeling(s) the pattern is much more complex than interpreters thought it to be. Since we lack the time for a thorough methodological approach with instruments that can be employed, one has to address these steps. The problems arising here can only be solved when taking into account cultural patterns, such as language and conceptual autonomy.

[83] Alternatively an "element of feeling".
[84] See footnote 13.

Fig. 1. Temple wall painting depicting the Ishtar cult of Mari (Tell Hariri), Keel 2008: 112-113 fig. 135.

Fig. 2. Line drawing of the Mari wall painting, Schroer 2008: 434.

Fig. 3-5. Excerpt from fig. 1 (Keel 2008: 19 fig. 13); photo of a dove (wikimedia foundation); photo of a bee-eater (*merops apiaster;* wikimedia foundation).

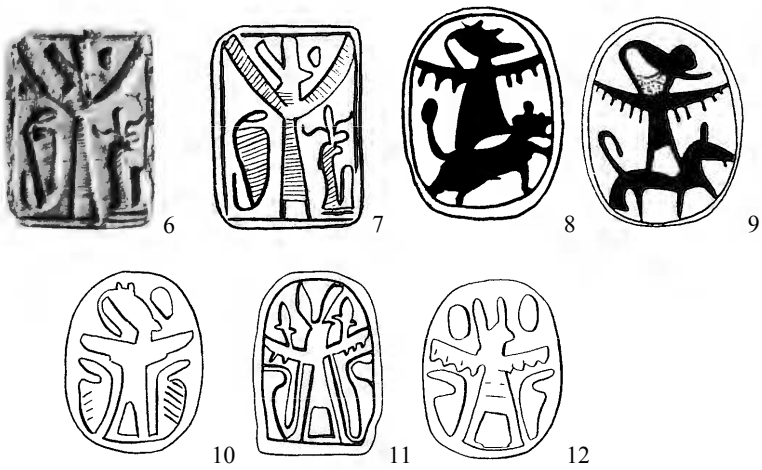


Fig. 6-7. Mistaken Hannover date palm (Beste 1979); 8-12. Stamp seals depicting Baal-Seth (Keel 1990: 303 fig. 68; 307 fig. 77.78; 305 fig. 72.70.69).

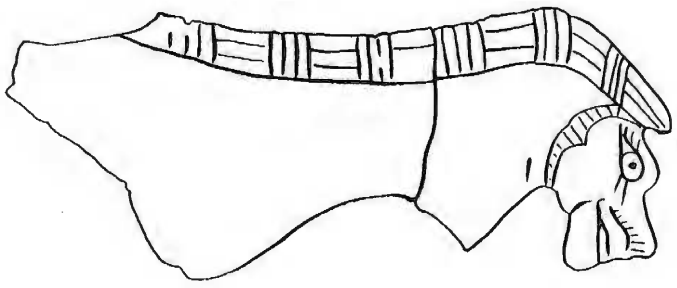
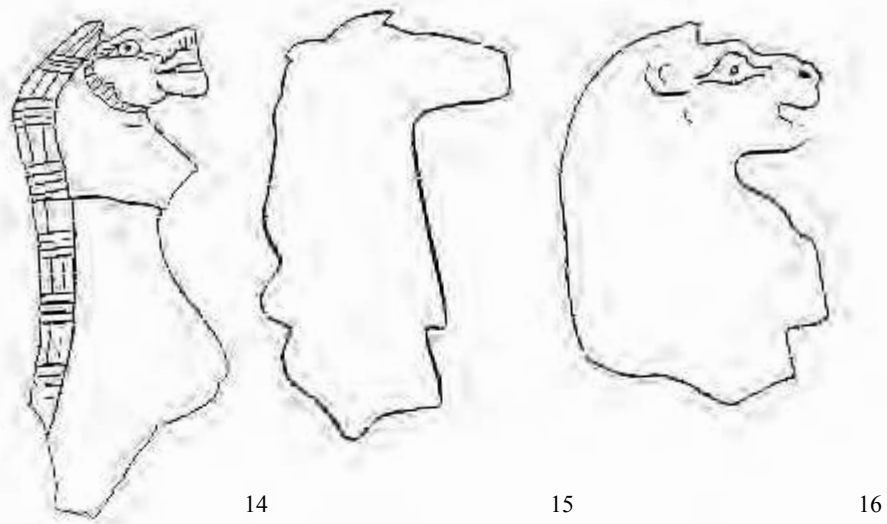
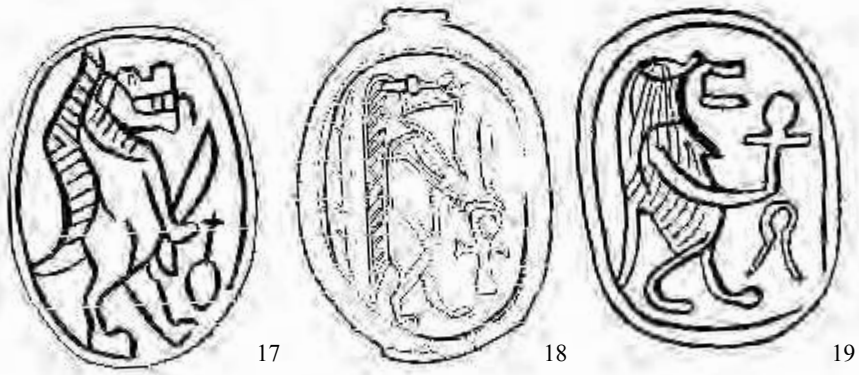


Fig. 13. Mistaken Hyksos horse (Schroer 2008: 287).



14 15 16

Fig. 14-16. Ivory inlays from Tell el-Ağğul and el-Ğisr (Keel 1993: 1-3).



17 18 19

Fig. 17-19. Stamp seals depicting *t3-wrt* (mistaken hyksos horse in upright position), Keel CSAPI I-II (Azor 15, Ağğul 215, Balach 130).

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Fig. 20. Ivory plaque depiction *t3-wrt* and other daemons (Keel 1993: 4).

Fig. 21. Anthropomorphic gestures of Egyptian art, Emma Brunner-Traut, LÄ II, 575-576.

Fig. 22. Birds with spread wings (often inerpreted as an adorating gesture by the non-human creation) iconographic renderings of the Amarna culture (Keel 2007: fig. 162).

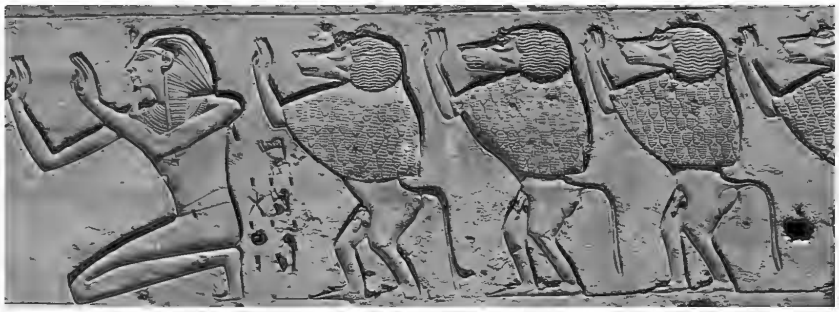

Fig. 23. Baboons in praying gestures at Medinat Habu (Photo: Florian Lippke).

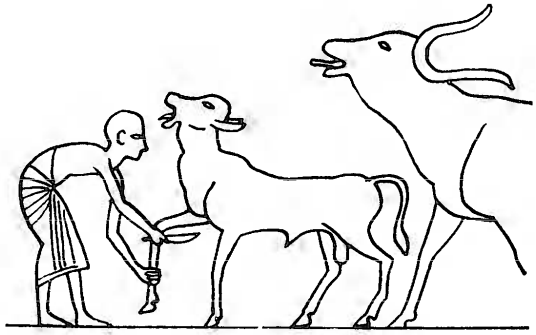

Fig. 24. Cutting a foreleg in the tomb of Ptahmoses (Keel 1981: 31).

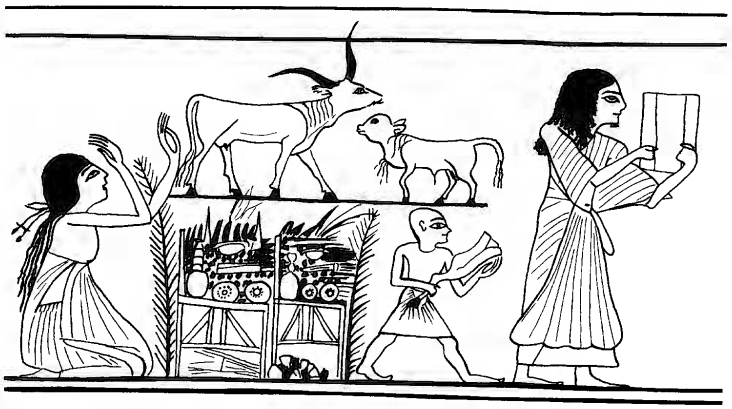

Fig. 25. Wailing and the constellation of cutting the leg of a calf (bleeding) and a priest / adorer translocating the foreleg, Papyrus Ani (Keel 1981: 31).

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# The Discourse on Emotion in Ancient Mesopotamia: A Theoretical Approach[1]

Margaret JAQUES

## *1. Introduction*

The study of the expression of emotion in ancient Mesopotamia is subject to the boundaries implied by a language and a culture that disappeared two thousand years ago. For lack of an anthropological approach to the Sumerians and the Akkadians themselves, we have to concentrate on its epiphenomena, which are the texts in which they expressed these emotions. Through the numerous documents that the Sumerians and Akkadians left us, is it possible to understand and analyse their emotions, not as psychologists or anthropologists, but as historians? While this question may at first sight seem surprising, its stake is part of a broader contemporary research context.[2]

We must first answer a methodological question: How is it possible to study emotions in ancient history? And how can we understand a subjective vocabulary in two extinct languages written on old, often broken, clay tablets? Lacking cuneiform treatises concerned with emotion words and in the absence of modern global studies on the subject, we are left to gather as much as possible from miscellaneous words in a multiplicity of documents. Those words, we think, are likely to designate emotions that reflect the contexts in which they appear. The methodological questions are very pragmatical: Do particular emotions occur in good or bad situations? Which narrative character expresses which emotion, in what period and in what context? What reaction does the expression of an emotion provoke?

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1 This article is based on my doctoral dissertation on Sumerian vocabulary of emotion (Jaques 2006). Sumerian words are transliterated in normal script (ki áĝ); Akkadian words are written in italic (*râmu)*; "=" (in $A_{sum.} = B_{akk.}$) should be understood as "belonging to the same semantic field of" or "is parallel with" rather than "signifies" or "is equivalent to". Concepts of emotion with elements of meaning are indicated between straight quotation marks ("joy"). For English corrections, I thank Emmert Clevenstine.

2 I have in mind here the new subfield of history known as "emotionology" and the history of American religions. In France, one of the first to research in this domain was Fevbre, "La sensibilité et l'histoire: Comment reconstituer la vie affective d'autrefois" (1941: 5-20). For ancient Mesopotamia, Oppenheim (1967) argued in his chapter "Can these bones live?" that in order to penetrate beneath the surface of the texts, we must search for "immediateness", that is, the perception of "both the unusual and the atypical diction and the echoes and allusions". Fevbre and Oppenheim each in their own way wanted to attempt a kind of "virtual fieldwork" as in anthropology.

Under these conditions, a delimitation of the field of investigation on the basis of our own emotional experience would only distort things by imposing artificial criteria on the text. To look elsewhere, in another, completely different cultural environment or historical era, for similar features of what the discourse on emotions was in Mesopotamia, would end up not only at a dead-end but also at totally erroneous notions. Other approaches to emotion research, whether philosophical, religious, psychological, ethnological, historical or linguistic, are not however without interest for our study. Historical and ethnological analyses allow us first to set down some principles such as the distinction between the emotions and the (meta-)language used to describe emotion.[3] Indeed, when an emotion appears at a given time, for example in Old Babylonian texts, we must ask ourselves what appears exactly, whether it is a new sensitivity or a new rhetoric. The only thing that we are sure of is that specific language expressing a certain type of emotion has appeared. But this does not prove of course that this emotion was not felt before.

Alain Corbin, a specialist in the study of 19th-century French thought, sets forth three reasons why an emotion may remain "non-said" (non-dit) in a given language: it is not-said because it is overly perceived (like the noise of cars in the street today), it is not-said because it is impossible to say (the word to express it does not exist) or because it is not the tradition to say it (for example, an emotional response to nature in an non-industrial society), and it is not said because it is forbidden to say it. To name an emotion is thus not a natural process, but an artificial creation, a cultural fact.[4] To each culture, to each society belongs a specific vocabulary expressing a certain number of emotions, according to a more or less broad or a more or less precise perspective. In the absence of all discourse about emotion by the Sumerians and the Akkadians themselves, it would be difficult to interpret why such an emotion does not appear in their writings or why a particular

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[3] Larsen (2001: 278) distinguishes between a "discourse on emotion" and an "emotional discourse". Bamberg (1997: 309) develops these two research angles. An emotional discourse is for him a two-fold form of discourse: a linguistic and an extralinguistic one (facial expression, body posture, proximity, etc.). In this view, "language and emotion are two concurrent, parallel systems in use, and their relationship exists in that one system (emotion) impacts on the performance of the other (language)". On the other hand, a discourse on emotion starts from the assumption that language "reflects" objects in the world, among them the emotions: "Language have emotion terms, and people across the world engage in talk *about* the emotions". In this other view, "Language is a means of making sense of emotions". As objects of study, it is important to distinguish between the study of emotions as the object of phenomenology, theology or psychology and the study of the discourse on emotion as the object of history and of linguistic and cultural anthropology. These different approaches are of course not exclusive.

[4] Lutz (1988: 209) concludes with the remark that "emotion experience (...) is more aptly viewed as the outcome of social relations and their corollary worldviews than as universal psychobiological entities". We find a similar remark in Grima (1992: 6): "Emotion is culture."

emotion is mentioned more often in reference to the relationship between man and god than to that between man and woman. It is, however, important to take note of these phenomena and to draw a chart as complete as possible of the emotions expressed and surely lived by the people of Mesopotamia.

The material for this study has been collected from three types of texts: lexical lists, royal inscriptions, and "literary" texts. The word "literary" must be taken in a broad sense, as it includes narrative documents as well as poetical texts, omens, and letters. These three types of sources do not have the same structure or the same goals, and the information that we obtain from them is varied and complementary. The case of the lexical lists is special because the terms are "without context", as would be the entries of a glossary without commentary. They enumerate Sumerian or Akkadian words, give written forms, and in bilingual lists add Akkadian, sometimes Hittite, translations. Their contents are gathered under a common denominator such as first names, professional names, names of objects in wood or of animals. The absence of a heading "emotion" poses straightaway the difficulty of classifying words gathered and interpreted today as "emotion words" of ancient cultures. For the ancient people of Mesopotamia, emotions did not belong to an overarching class of psychological or cultural experience, but were distinct notions, apparently without any link between them. To pose a type "emotion" is a theoretical artifice allowing modern research to take place. It cannot, however, presuppose the reality of such a type in ancient Mesopotamia.

There is a multiplicity of emotion words in Sumerian and Akkadian that scholars render with the help of conventional *ad hoc* translations, even if they are aware that the concepts of that time do not correspond to the modern equivalents. Even in modern languages, when we look at the stock of emotion words in a given language, often we do not find exactly corresponding words in other languages: to appreciate this, it is enough to compare the German word "Glück" with the English word "happiness".[5]

Before one risks a definition or a classification of this vocabulary, a study on and around the signification of each word must also be performed. The first source of information on the meaning, and by far the most reliable one, is the immediate literary context. This implies that language is the obligatory way to access historical knowledge. The first step in any research is to decipher and understand the texts we have at hand. In a second step, one can make semantic comparisons between Akkadian translations of Sumerian material and other Semitic languages. The Akkadian translations, which come either from the lexical lists or from bilingual texts, although contemporary with the Sumerian speakers, cannot serve as the unique basis

[5] For the same observation concerning the English word "anger", see Harkins/Wierzbicka (2001: 3ff.).

for the attribution of meaning, because these translations are not philological in nature, and their purpose was not to produce exact semantic equivalents, but more of adequations. One can also look in other directions: through the study of etymology when it is possible**,** and on the base of one's own common sense. Indeed, these steps do not produce proofs, as is so often the case in the study of ancient cultures, but rather highlight tendencies that make a researcher incline toward one manner of understanding rather than toward another one. These first tools provide a necessary preliminary framework into which successive elements of research can be woven.[6]

## *2. Classification of the Vocabulary of Emotion*

If emotions are indeed cultural, they are not invariable.[7] They are a socially validated judgement from individuals rather than an innate category. Therefore research has to focus on emotion words and on the domains of meaning expressed by the texts associated with them. Study of the discourse on emotion has to concentrate on the norms of expression, which may appear radically different to the outside observer.

The expression of emotions in ancient Mesopotamia can be classified into broad categories. In a very schematic manner and by basing oneself on the corpus mentioned before, we can differentiate the material into "conventional expression" and "non-conventional expression". In conventional discourse, an identical and recurring expression can be compared and inscribed in a chart almost out of context. This is the case, for example, for

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6 Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) as a tool for cross-cultural analysis of emotion words is a theory developed by Wierzbicka (see Harkins/Wierzbicka 2001: 8-16). Emotion words are "complex (decomposable) and culture-specific" concepts which cannot simply be translated into another language. To understand emotion words, "experts" need to understand the explanations of ordinary people. For that they have to share a common language made of "simple and universal words" like "good"/"bad", "think", "people", "I", "you" etc.
This tool is likely to function in fieldwork, but it meets difficulties in historical research: In ancient cultures, texts do not reveal all "statements of meanings" because the historian cannot reach all the layers of a society. For Pongratz-Leisten (2001: 196) "historical research has to be aware that the city-oriented language power creates its own dimension of meaning and conceives of city life as inherently superior to life in the countryside and in the steppe". Also Larsen (2001: 283) "we must (...) realise that such statements reach us through layers of conventions and social and linguistic norms". It is clear that in his research, the historian meets not historical facts but rather the conception of the world expressed by urban literate elite.

7 For a review of the radical opposition between different points of view that lead to different theories, see the chapter "Tensions in the study of emotion" in Lutz/White 1986: 406ff. Lutz also explains these theories in the chapter "Emotion, thought, and estrangement: Western discourses on feeling" (1988: 53-80).

the repetitive material of the royal inscriptions that are not intended to convey real emotions but rather appropriate, formal expressions of feelings on specific occasions. In a non-conventional expression, on the other hand, each relationship has an interest and an importance in itself. It is appropriate to distinguish in these expressions between the more realistic ones and the more idealistic versions. The main difficulty is in fact inherent in the topic of the research itself precisely because emotions are cultural automatisms, that is, they need not be commented on. Acquired conventions, norms, and habits dictate what emotion can be shown to whom and in which contexts. Sometimes we can find no reason for emotion. Daily life very largely escapes the written sources, yet emotions were lived daily by the ancient people of Mesopotamia.

On the chart of words for emotions, it appears that certain terms are used very often, others more seldom, and some very rarely. We see an analytical frame organising itself, with on one side an abundance of data, metaphorical images, and descriptions, and on the other side a surprising poverty of elements. One has to be aware not to fall into the trap of the "said" and "non-said" as mentioned by Corbin (2000), but must also be able to identify the norms that order their differences and to observe their modulations in the documents. Different factors – for example the literary corpus in which a vocabulary is attested first, but also perhaps historical, religious, or moral aspects – can have influenced their representation systems, their differences, and their permanencies. Armed with these methodological observations, one can concentrate on the lexical question and distinguish eleven categories of emotion in Mesopotamia: The vocabulary of "joy", "anger", "love", "hate", "sadness", "fear", and different statements for "trouble", "compassion" and one word for "jealousy".

Besides surmounting the difficulties of translation, it is also necessary to focus on the manner in which this terminology would have behaved in context: Is it employed in epithets? With which agent or subject? To these two questions, we should add the separate study of what we might call the words or expressions used in closely related senses that do not belong to the vocabulary of emotion, like "darkness" or "twisted", which appear in similar contexts.

This approach makes it possible to identify constant features. When we speak in terms of emotion, this implies either an isolated subject or the perception by an agent of a given reality. In other words, the emotion is a moral, aesthetic, or legal judgement about reality or a personal quality or shortcoming. This distinction is important as, confronted with the question "why is such a god, such a hero, or such a man happy?" we have the choice, following the grammatical construction of the sentence, between an incidental cause ("he is happy *because* of such a thing, such an event, or such ritual") or a permanent nature ("he has a happy, good, optimistic na-

ture"). This distinction can have historical or religious premises. It may also have historical and religious consequences.

On the other hand, it appears during the textual analysis that the contexts are either individual and internal, or collective, external and ritual. This observation has implications that are not as simple as they may seem. It means that ancient Mesopotamian emotions can be seen either as a psychological impression of an affect or as the expression of a social and religious norm. The latter applies in particular to terminology for joy and sadness. Gary Anderson, in a book with the evocative title *A Time to Cry, a Time to Dance* (1995), studied this problematic in the Jewish religion: the word *śimḫa* "joy" can be used in the same contexts and occurrences as modern European terms, but like the words for "love" and "honour" in the Hebrew Bible, *śimḫa* also appears in legal texts. "Joy" can thus be prescribed on certain occasions, such as sacrificial feasting or the performance of psalms. The rites expressing "joy" stand in precise opposition to rites of "mourning".

| *"Joy"* | *"Mourning"* |
|---|---|
| Eating and drinking | Fasting |
| Praise of God | Lamentation |
| Anointing with oil | Putting ashes or dust on one's head |
| Festal garments | Sackcloth or torn clothes |

### *2.1. Need, demand and the positive relationship to others: the emotions of "joy", "love" and "compassion"*

Observing the varieties of the data gives us the opportunity to reflect on the elements of continuity and rupture inside the expression of need, demand and positive relationship with others. "Joy" is the most representative emotion in the general corpus, probably because most of the texts we possess have a hymnal character. To express it, the Sumerians had no fewer than four verbs and three substantives, corresponding to twice as many Akkadian equivalents (verbs and their derivatives, or idiomatic clauses). Such richness can be explained by the patchwork of expressions describing "joy" in different situations: individual or communal, isolated or relational. The Sumerian word ḫul$_2$ and the Akkadian equivalent *ḫadû* are the *terminus technicus* for "joy" meaning in the most general manner "to be happy, to rejoice". The other words express as many emotions as situations: The Sumerian composed verb, ul te(.ĝ), for example, refers to a joy linked with drunkenness and euphoria: "The gods Enki (and) Ninmaḫ drink beer, their heart become elated (ul te(.ĝ)"[8]. It may also have sexual connotations: "The

[8] Enki et Ninmaḫ Sect. II 15: $^{d}$En-ki-ke$_4$ $^{d}$Nin-maḫ-e kaš im-na$_8$-na$_8$-ne ša$_3$-bi ul mu-un-te.

god Enki became elated (ul te(.ĝ) (at the sight) of the goddess Uttu; lying in her crotch, he clasped her to the bosom"[9]. On the other hand, the composed verb $ša_3$ $dug_3$ which, according to its etymology, is a quality ($dug_3$ "good") of the heart ($ša_3$), is used more to show the satisfaction, especially in a juridical context, for example after a debt has been repaid,[10] but also for contentment and well-being in general.

There are specific collective occasions where the use of words of "joy" is common, the most important one being religious and royal festivities. The festival day is itself metaphorically called in Akkadian "day of joy" (*ūm ḫidûtu*) or "play, entertainment" (*mēlultu*). The texts give the principal aspects of festive rejoicing: banquets, prayers and praises, familial life, sexual relationships, music, etc. These positive aspects appear in the counsels of Siduri, the ale-wife, to Gilgameš who is seeking eternal life after the death of his companion Enkidu.[11]

Humor is attested principally in late Babylonian literature, but throughout Sumerian and Akkadian texts we find proverbs, jokes, and word plays, whose goal is to make readers laugh. Humor of this sort was originally the creation of students, and it belonged to the school curriculum, especially when in the form of debates between two partners such as the Hoe and the Plough, the Bird and the Fish, or the Grain and the Sheep.

"Joy" is the sign of a good and healthy relationship with gods. This "normal order of things" is expressed in Sumerian by the expression "to look on someone with a joyful eye" (igi $ḫul_2$ bar) or "to have a luminous forehead" (saĝ-ki zalag). This joy, which has the magical power to heal the sick person, always comes from the gods' side and is often linked to the act of determining a good fate: "The god An threw him (= the king) a joyful eye (igi $ḫul_2$) (and) determined for him a good fate."[12]

"Love", expressed by the Sumerian ki $aĝ_2$ (= *râmu* in Akkadian), is one of the substantives most used in the literature of all periods. The etymology of the Sumerian word ki $aĝ_2$ is controversial: until recently ki was considered to mean "earth" and $aĝ_2$ to be the verb "to measure", so that "to love" would etymologically mean "to measure a piece of land"! New research, especially on the written form of the word ki, have shown that in this case it cannot signify "earth"[13]. The Akkadian word *râmu* corresponds

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9 Enki et Ninḫursaĝa 179-180: $^{d}$En-ki-$ke_4$ $^{d}$Uttu-ra ul im-m[a]-ni-in-t[i] gaba šu im-mi-in-dab $ur_2$-ra-[n]a $nu_2$-a.

10 Muffs 1975.

11 For the well-known discourse of Siduri to Gilgameš, see George 2003: 278-279. Tigay (1982: 167ff.) qualifies these recommendations as *carpe diem* in a chapter on "Traditional Speech Forms". For an analysis of this passage, see Abusch 1993a: 1-14; id. 1993b: 3-17; id. 1993c: 53-62.

12 Hymn to Ninšubur and her city(?) A-akkil rev. 3: An-$ne_2$ igi $ḫul_2$-la mu-ši-in-bar nam $dug_3$ mu-ši-i[n-tar] (cf. Sjöberg 1982: 72 no.4).

13 ki "earth" has a final -0 (ki+locative = ki-'a), whereas ki in ki $aĝ_2$ is syllabically written: ki-ig, ki-ga and ki-in.

to the Arabic word *ra'ima*.[14] "Love" in ancient Mesopotamia is used primarily in religious contexts. To give "love" to humans is a privilege of gods. It is the expression of an agreement in a political and juridical contractual relationship between a god and another god of lower standing or a human being, for example the king Šulgi: "Šulgi, (the beloved of her heart =) the favorite one of the goddess Ninlil."[15]

A change in this conception of the hierarchy can be observed in the royal hymns of Šulgi. During the third dynasty of Ur the kings were divinized. The name Šulgi was written from around his 10th year of reign onward with the determinative diĝir "god". The kings stood on an equal level with the gods and they could both "love" (like a god) and "be loved" (like a king or a human being). This different relationship appears also in the use of the derivative participle ki aĝ$_2$-(ĝa$_2$) (= *narāmu*) in epithets for gods and for kings.

The symmetrical opposite word for ki aĝ$_2$ "love" is ḫul gig "to hate". ki aĝ$_2$ and ḫul gig often appear in opposition in declarations of value or in moral judgement, for example in opposing "justice" and "iniquity": "The god Sîn who loves justice, who hates iniquity".[16] The same occurrence is attested with the Akkadian equivalents *râmu* "to love" and *zêru* "to hate": "Hate evil, love justice!"[17]

"Love" appears in affective contexts in the literature between gods, especially in the Love Songs for the Sacred Marriage ritual.[18] In a late celebration, the Akkadian *râmu* is attested with words for affection, tenderness and sexual attractiveness such as *dâdu / dâdū* "beloved one, dear", *inbu* "fruit" also "sexual fullness", *kuzbu* "seduction, attraction, sensuality", *ṣīḫtu* "laugh". The word for "love" in Akkadian seems to have changed from a juridical meaning to a more emotional one.

The Sumerian word arḫuš, like its Akkadian equivalent *rêmu* (a word that has nothing to do with *râmu* "to love"), is used to refer to an emotion close to what in English might be termed our "compassion". In Sumerian and in Akkadian the word also means "womb". The semantic relationship between "compassion" and "womb", even if it is found elsewhere in the ancient Near East, is not self-evident.[19] It is true that in modern culture the

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14 See Barth 1909: 3f. and Wehr $^{5}$1985: 441.

15 Šulgi D 13: Šul-gi $^{d}$Nin-lil$_2$-la$_2$ ki aĝ$_2$ ša$_3$-ga-na.

16 Lugalbanda and Ḫurrum 215-216: $^{d}$Sîn-e niĝ$_2$-si-sa$_2$-e ki aĝ$_2$ niĝ$_2$-erim$_2$-e ḫul gig.

17 BE 1/1 no. 83 rev. 24: *lemutta zērma kitta rām.*

18 The Sumerian Sacred Marriage ritual is partially known from its description in the hymn of Iddin-Dagan and Inanna, see Römer 1965: 128-208. During the Isin dynasty and probably before, the probably very ancient ritual included sexual intercourse between the king and a priestess representing the goddess Inanna. In the 1st millennium, the marriage was celebrated between the gods represented by their cult statues and no longer by human actors. The best known example is the marriage between the gods Marduk and Ṣarpānītu in Babylon, see Lapinskivi 2004 with numerous references.

19 See Stoebe 1976: 761-768.

"womb" is a metaphor for maternal protection, love, and pity, but the linguistic derivation from a substantive referring to a concretely defined unit ("a substance of constant quality")[20] to a verb describing an emotion is an aspect that should be clarified.

"Compassion" is often used in divine epithets, mostly in apposition with the name of a goddess rather than of a god. It also appears in parallel construction with words for "prayer": "Mother of the land, who has compassion, who loves veneration, who listens to prayer".[21] It is thus the gods who one asks for "compassion", which is often linked with appeasing divine anger and the topic of the "return" of the god "to his (previous) place" (ki-bi-šè $gi_4$), which means to his normal, positive mood toward humans. The compassion of the gods, once granted, is indicated by words and gestures of help and renewed recognition. The movement in the emotion is always from above to below, that is, a god always gives compassion to someone of an inferior standing. As a divine quality or divine favour, "compassion" can only be the expression of an elite.

### *2.2. Principle of justice, domination, and the emotions of "anger" and "hate"*

"Anger" is well attested in the Mesopotamian corpus. In the Old Assyrian letters, the large number of expressions of anger, irritation or reproach is striking. The expression of such emotion is mostly judged negatively: "Although we never made you angry, as for you – we have become non-gentlemen in your eyes".[22] Some essential features of "gentlemanly behaviour" imply living up to norms of a social code that include self-control and politeness.[23] It is very important not to cause anger, worry, or distress to friends or relatives.

Not to anger the gods is a topic of mythological and religious texts. The god's anger is communicated through divine omens or signs that are more than a warning, the germ of unhappiness already infecting the person and their environment with negative energy. The gods demonstrate their anger through a specific attitude: he "turns his face away" (igi niĝin = *pānī suḫḫuru*) and looks with an "evil eye" (igi ḫul = *īnu lemuttu*) also called

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[20] See Mounin 1974, 325.

[21] Sîn-iddinam to Nininsina 9: ama kalam-ma arḫuš $šud_3$-$de_3$ ki $aĝ_2$ a-r[a-zu-e ĝiš tu]ku (cf. Hallo 1976: 209-224).

[22] TC 3, 1:23-27: *matīma libbaka ula nulammin attā ana lā awīlī ina ēnīka šaknāni*.

[23] The topic of self-control is found especially in letters: "Be a man! Do not let yourself loose to drink!" This controlled behaviour is also expected from princes: "It is with the servants that you began spending more than what you had and wasting! Come on, don't be a baby! They only come to see you for..., for leading you astray, for the ale-house and the music-hall!" (ARM 1, 28 = Durand 1997, 16 no.2:11-13 and 15-19). For a study of the critique made by soldiers of city life as too soft and effeminate, see Lion 2003: 17f.

"eye of death" (igi $uš_2$). The evil eye can kill humans, and even gods when sent by a rival god. This is well illustrated by a passage in the myth of Descent of Inanna to the Netherworld, where Inanna, angered by the behavior of her lover Dumuzi, who has been indifferent to the news of her death, decides to hand him over to bad demons: "She (= Inanna) looked at him (= Dumuzi), it was the look of death (igi $uš_2$). She spoke to him; it was the speech of anger. She shouted to him, it was the shout of heavy guilt: 'How much longer? Take him away!' Holy Inanna gave Dumuzi the shepherd into their hands (= of the demons)".[24]

The person who perceives this anger has the possibility to divert its negative effects by making a namburbi ritual (literally "its dissolving [procedure]"). If the negative effects are already present, it can remove the effects by means of penitential prayers and rituals like the eršaḫuĝa ("lament to soothe the heart (of the god)") or the diĝiršadaba ("incantation to change the angry heart of the god"). The end of the divine anger is signified by the "return of the god to his previous place" (ki-bi-$še_3$ $gi_4$) and by his "looking with a joyful eye" (igi $ḫul_2$ bar).

"Anger" can be justifiable when it is directed against enemies who endanger not only the nation but the whole cultural achievement. It represents morality and legitimate domination.

The technical term for "hate" is ḫul gig. This word appears in our corpus in strict opposition to ki $aĝ_2$, "to love", as a literary means to reinforce their opposition: "A loving heart is something that maintains the household, a hating heart is something that destroys the household".[25]

The Sumerian language uses two more verbs for hostility: $gu_2$ $du_3$ and $gu_2$ bar. These verbs, composed with $gu_2$, "back of the neck", belong to physiognomic language; they are a description of a hostile attitude perhaps borrowed from the animal world (bristled fur). This hostility is mostly attributed to the enemy.[26] It is found in concrete, warlike contexts in royal

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[24] Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld 354-358: igi mu-un-ši-in-bar igi $uš_2$-a-ka, inim i-ne-ne inim lipiš gig-ga, $gu_3$ i-ne-$de_2$ $gu_3$ nam-tag-tag-ga, $en_3$-$še_3$ $tum_3$-mu-an-$ze_2$-en, $ku_3$ $^{d}$Inanna-$ke_4$ $su_8$-ba $^{d}$Dumu-zi-da šu-ne-ne-a in-na-$šum_2$.

[25] SP Coll. 11.147-148 = InstrŠur. 207-208:
Abū Salabīkh version: $ša_3$ ki $aĝ_2$ $niĝ_2$ $e_2$ $du_3$-$du_3$ $ša_3$ ḫu[1](RI) gig $niĝ_2$ $e_2$ gul-gul
Old-Babylonian version: $ša_3$ ki $aĝ_2$ $niĝ_2$ $e_2$ $du_3$-$du_3$-$u_3$-dam $ša_3$ ḫul gig $niĝ_2$ $e_2$ gul-gul-lu-dam (cf. Alster, vol. 1, 1997: 196).

[26] Enemies are described as barbarians who were deprived of any social code of behaviour, like in the Curse of Agade 155-156:
Gu-ti-um$^{ki}$ $uĝ_3$ $kešš_2$-da nu-zu, $dim_2$-ma $lu_2$-$ulu_3$ ĝalga ur-e uktin / $^{ugu2}$$ugu_4$-bi
"The Gutians, an unbridled people, (are) of human appearance, (but) with canine rules and monkey's features".
As Pongratz-Leisten (2001: 195) points out "the thought-process standing behind constructing the image of the Other is to be characterized as a systematic thought-process of inversion". She explains that the processes of *de-humanization* and *demonization* of the enemy enable members of a cultural group to "trivializ[e] killing inhibitions" (ibid., 208, 227).

inscriptions of the Old Babylonian period: “The ones who were hostile against you, we shall strike them” (Akk. “We shall strike your enemies”).[27]

Like "anger", ḫul gig is an ambivalent emotion in Sumerian discourse: when opposed to ki aĝ$_2$ it is clearly negative, but when employed alone it is close to a justified anger, a legitimate hatred of a negative object (or focus) (it can be interpreted as “X judges Y hateful”). This is not the case for gu$_2$ du$_3$ and gu$_2$ bar, which are never employed in a moral judgement.

The three Sumerian verbs (ḫul gig, gu$_2$ du$_3$, and gu$_2$ bar) are translated by a single verb (*zêru*) in Akkadian. This difference between the conception of "hate" in Sumerian and Akkadian discourse on emotion reflects a cultural disagreement. *zêru* can describe a negative attitude and a legitimate negative moral judgement. In the latter sense it can appear in legal texts where for Meir Malul (1988: 113) it represents an act of rejection that leads to the dissolving of a contractual relationship.

The Sumerian word for "jealousy" (ninim) is astonishingly rare in the literature.[28] How can we understand that such a common emotion in modern culture as “jealousy” is attested only three times in Sumerian literature? One explanation should perhaps be sought in the cuneiform sign that we read ninim, which is a combination of the signs ŠA$_3$ “heart” and IZI “fire”  . This visual combination of “heart” + “fire” is reminiscent of another sign combination, KA “mouth” and IZI “fire”  , which writes the word for "anger", urgu$_2$. In both cases, the emotion appears as a fire, burning respectively the heart or the mouth. The sign is thus like an illustration of the emotion. The cuneiform signs and many other pieces of evidence, such as lexical entries, tend to show a semantic relationship between "jealousy" and words for "anger". Thus, the distinction between "jealousy" and "anger" does not correspond to today’s criteria: in fact these two notions belong to the same Sumerian category, that of "anger".

### *2.3. Reaction facing danger and loss: the emotions of "sadness", "trouble", and "fear"*

The Sumerian and Akkadian languages are noteworthy for their lack of a specific word for "sadness". All that we find in their vocabularies are words describing manifestations of sadness, such as er$_2$ “tears”, er$_2$ šeš$_2$/še$_8$-še$_8$ “to cry, to sob” (literally “to anoint with water-eye” as a description of the very act of shedding tears), a-nir “desolation”, i-si-iš “tears, lamentation, complaint” and metaphorical expressions mixing expression of sadness and

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[27] Samsuiluna 7:19"-20" (Akk. 73): lu$_2$ gu$_2$ mu-e-da-ab-du$_3$-uš-a saĝ ĝiš ba-ab-ra-ra-an-de$_3$-en = *zā'irīka ninâr* (cf. Frayne 1990: 386).

[28] See Civil 1990: 44-45.

words referring to rituals of lamentation ($er_2$(-)a-ni-ra = *ina bikīti u tānīḫi* "in the tears and the desolation" is an expression referring to the lamentations in general, and $er_2$ alone corresponds in Akkadian to *taqribtum* "complaint of supplication" ("Bittklage") and to *pišertu* "rite of delivery" (from *pašārum*). balaĝ-a-nir-ra "the harps of desolation" and gi-$er_2$-ra "the reed of tears" are musical instruments used in rituals of lamentation. What does the absence of a generic word for "sadness" mean? It would be ethnocentric to assert that ancient Mesopotamians really experienced a basic emotion "sadness" but that they used different words to express it on different occasions, suggesting that they did not or could not generalize by giving it a single label the way English speakers do. All that the texts contain are facial and bodily expressions of sadness. Whatever might constitute an "emotional universal" would need to be identified in cultural terms valid for the Mesopotamian context, not in terms of the English lexicon of emotion.[29]

A first observation of the contexts where an expression of "sadness" appears can perhaps explain the absence of a category. In letters, it is not right to burden one's correspondent with litanies of personal problems: "Your transgressions are many, and therefore worry for you is eating me up!"[30] By contrast, litanies describing distress are characteristic of penitential prayers to gods. It was mostly seen as better to use an elliptical phrasing like the Old Assyrian standard phrase: *lā libbi ilimma*, "against the will of the god", or more vaguely "unfortunately, sadly".

The semantic field covered by one word can be different from one culture to another: $ša_3$ $kuš_2$-$u_3$ is a good example of a practically untranslatable emotion concept, rendered by Akkadian writers with *malāku* "to counsel" but clearly not equivalent to Akkadian word, still less to any English word. $ša_3$ $kuš_2$-$u_3$ means literally "to put a strain on the heart"; it appears in context of love; it is also the emotion of someone listening to music or writing a tablet. These usages suggest that the Sumerian word describes a kind of thrill, a vibration more than a "counsel". This difference in usage of emotion words is connected in some way with cultural attitudes and cultural identity.

Two more words, $niĝ_2$-me-ĝar and $mud_5$-me-ĝar, rendered in Akkadian by "silence (of death)" (*qūlu* later also *kūru*), are negatively perceived. They never mean "quietness", which is sought by the gods in the myths of Atram-ḫasis or Gilgameš, but are associated with death, unhappiness, and prostration. Demons appear to be identified with this type of silence or can be the cause of it. But like many other Sumerian words, the context of this

[29] Harkins and Wierzbicka (2001: 8) emphasize that "We cannot treat English emotion words such as *anger* as neutral, self-explanatory, and culture-independent terms by means of which human emotional experience in all cultures can be validly and meaningfully described".

[30] Lewy, KTS 15:7-8: *šillātuka mādāma u pirdātuka ētaklāni*.

type of silence is ambivalent[31] since it seems also to evoke "joy", or at least sometimes a positive emotion or quality: “Inanna, who like a bull gores the disobedient, joy(?) of the land”.[32]

Many Sumerian and Akkadian emotion words are ambiguous and remote from our modern conceptions. To work on understanding emotion words involves studying the communication in its social context, a position between the individual and the social world (“a culturally constituted self”[33]). Emotion concepts emerge as a kind of language of the self, a code about intentions, actions, and social relations. They need interpretation and “translation” to be communicated to others in different cultures and historical periods.

## *3. Emotion as Grand Type*[34]

Another direction in the study of emotions is the search for points of contact between these disparate elements: How can we find connections between such different concepts as "love", "hate", "trouble", "despair", "joy", etc., in the absence of any generic category given by the Mesopotamian themselves?

We have to make a transfer from the observation of semantic data to the complex network of grammatical, syntactic, and stylistic constructions, that is, the “meta-level of the evaluation of the written construction of social reality”.[35] The terms for emotion are submitted to the multiple word choice of pressure and inertia, to the dialectic proper to languages, constantly shaped by the tradition of communication. The second step here is inductive and comparative. It is the comparison of diverse grammatical elements and syntactical forms that allows us not only to measure variations but also to catch a glimpse of the invariants of the whole. We can then make a relatively autonomous abstract framework of this set, other than semantic, and

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31 Ambivalence in emotion is not incoherence, as each culture employs a set of words or expressions for ambivalent emotions that cannot be rendered by a single term in another language.

32 Išme-Dagan AB:6: nu-še-ga am-gin$_7$ si-mul di mud$_5$-me-ĝar kalam-ma.

33 Cf. Lutz/White 1986: 417.

34 Nissenbaum (1985: iii) subdivides the word “emotion” in “types” and “instances”: 1) “emotion” is a grand type when it is used without plural form like the word “color”; 2) anger and joy are emotion’s types. They are subtypes of the grand type and have a plural form; 3) individual having emotions at locations are instances. It is the concrete situation of a subject having an emotion.

35 Cf. Pongratz-Leisten 2001: 216. Harkins and Wierzbicka (2001: 17) argue that “it is not only the lexicon that provides clues to the emotional universe of culture. Grammar does it too”. For example, they indicate that active verbs like *rejoice* have disappeared from modern English usage, giving way to passive adjectives like *happy* or *pleased*.

it is on this framework that we can define new categories, morpho-syntactic ones this time, and functions.

In considering the problem on the basis of a new but still general framework, we have to introduce a reservation with regard to theories based on the constructions established with only one or two verbs of emotion, not because they are wrong, but because we have to consider them with the help of a larger number of examples. The Sumerian verbs form a separate field because of the prefix chain that summarizes the grammatical structure of the sentence. The prefix chain is extremely complex but very interesting, particularly among agglutinating languages like Sumerian.[36] Scholars have long proposed that most Sumerian verbs of emotion had a comitative ({da}) construction, the comitative indicating that the verb has a relationship *with* its object.[37]

> Ean. 1 v 1-5[38]
> $e_2$-an-na-tum$_2$, a $ša_3$-ga šu $du_{11}$-ga, $^{d}$nin-ĝir$_2$-su-ka-**da,** $^{d}$nin-ĝir$_2$-su, mu-**da**-ḫul$_2$
> "Ninĝirsu rejoiced over Eannatum, the seed placed in the lap of Ninĝirsu".

It is obvious that this assertion has to be differently qualified when applied on a larger scale. Verbs as common as "to love" and "to hate" for example, are conjugated with dative or directive infixes and/or a suffix following their object.[39] Most of the verbs expressing "fear", except perhaps ḫu-luḫ "to start, to be suddenly afraid", have a terminative ({ši}) rection expressing a direction *toward* its object. This could indicate that it does not belong to the strict category of emotion words.

Some verbs with the comitative rection, however, appear also in the absolutive state (unmarked construction) that gives them a factitive sense. More explicitly, in a comitative construction ḫul$_2$, for example, means "I rejoice about someone" (mu-un-da-ḫul$_2$-en [intransitive construction]), but in the absolutive unmarked state, it has the sense "I make someone happy" (mu-un-ḫúl-en [transitive construction]). In such sentences, the emotion is expressed by a transitive verb, followed by a grammatical direct

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[36] For a recent Sumerian grammar in English, see Jagersma 2011.

[37] Not all emotions have objects, for example the substantive arḫuš (= *rēmu*) "compassion, pity" is used to describe a positive quality of goddesses more than an emotion. Nissenbaum (1985: 84) argues that "predicates involving intransitive verbs often constitute cases of non-relational predicates. (...) They assert states of their subject (...)".

[38] Cf. Steible 1982, vol. 1: 123.

[39] These Sumerian verbs distinguish in their conjugation between a personal and a non-personal object. When the object of "to love", for example, is a human, the construction is dative ({ra}), while when the object is the city or an ex-voto, the construction is directive ({e}). This type of conjugation is characteristic of Sumerian composed verbs, cf. Attinger 1993: 233, 239.

object. These are similar to sentences with transitive verbs that describe actions.[40]

What follows from these descriptions is that the construction of verbs with the comitative ({da}) seems to describe an internal emotion ("to feel oneself about X") whereas the construction with dative/directive and with terminative would characterize an action toward an object ("to (re)act emotionally toward X"). The grammar of Sumerian verbs of emotion shows at least two categories of constructions that could be called both internal *and* active.

The construction of Akkadian verbs of emotion is simpler: it reflects in part the construction of the corresponding Sumerian verbs (*ḫadû* "to rejoice" is intransitive in the basic stem, but is transitive in the D stem, a stem that express factitive function: *muḫaddi libbi $^{d}$Ištar* "the one who rejoices the heart of Ištar"). Verbs like *râmu* "to love" and *zêru* "to hate" are transitive in the basic stem (*ummašu irammušu attī jâti ul taramminni* "his mother loves him, but you do not love me") and other stems from these two verbs are very rarely attested. These verbs are, as Kouwenberg (2010: 56f.) calls them, "fientive verbs with a stative meaning".

### *3.1. Syntactic rules of valency*

It is on the morpho-syntactic level that we explore the relationships between the constituents of the sentence in the discourse on emotion with particular attention turned to the variations. As Lemaréchal[41] says, "syntax and semantics are linked because syntax imposes categorizations on reality. The syntax contributes to the communicating significance".[42] It is the nature of the constituents that largely determines the structure of a proposition. This structure implies a subject or an agent and, in this case, a reference to an object. As a judgement made about reality, the emotion leads to action or inertia, but the cause of the action or inertia can be either the subject or the object of emotion.[43]

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[40] Kenny (1963, 2nd ed. 2003: 138ff.) distinguish between "intensional" and "nonintensional" verbs, "the aim being a distinction that will include all psychological verbs under the heading "intensional" and all other under the heading "nonintensional". Nissenbaum (1985: 24) disagrees with Kenny who "wants to avoid having to treat emotion verbs like action verbs and, likewise, their objects.

[41] See Lemaréchal 1989: 14.

[42] Also Sahlins 1981: 6f.: Circumstances "have no existence or effect in culture except as they are interpreted. And interpretation is, after all, classification within a given category."

[43] Nissenbaum (1985: i) describes and discusses three main theories about "emotion's object directedness": 1) An object-directed emotion is related to a real concrete item; 2) An object arises out of the emotional (or intentional) state alone; 3) An object contains the cause or the explanation of the emotion.

The analysis proceeds along two fully developed lines. One line treats the relationships between the subjects and the objects in sentences with a verb of emotion, for example: *nārū muḫaddû libbi ilāni* "The musicians who make the hearts of the gods *rejoice*".[44] The other line deals with the nature of verbs in a proposition containing one or many words of emotion, for example: lugal-bi $^{d}$Nin-ĝir$_2$-su ḫul$_2$-la tum$_2$-mu-da "To *bring* joy to their lord Ningirsu".[45] The role of the object of an emotion in a sentence touches on the linguistic problem of valency and actancy.[46] As Nissenbaum explains in her book on "focus",[47] the role of the object is mostly causal: "A simple theory based on this form of the condition is one that requires the object of the emotion to be the *cause* of the subject's having the emotion" (1985: 6).

### *3.2. Stylistic aspects*

One of the principal characteristics of the vocabulary of emotion in Sumerian is the presence of the word ša$_3$ "heart". The Mesopotamian conception of the world and the person is broadly binary, in that there is an inside (ša$_3$ = *libbu*)[48] and an outside (bar = *kabattu* "liver").[49] The heart, in the conception of the self, is the seat of emotion and the centre of thought. The morphological relationship of ša$_3$ to the noun or the verb varies. It can be, for example, an "endocentric extension", to use the terminology of Martinet.[50] An endocentric extension does not add information about the intrinsic features of the subject's state but imparts an emphatic sense to the noun or

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44 YOS 1, 45 ii 29.

45 Gudea Cyl. B ix 20.

46 Lazard 1994.

47 See Nissenbaum 1985; also Bamberg (1997: 309): "someone does something that *causes* someone else to become angry".

48 Beside ša$_3$ "heart", Sumerian also uses ni$_2$(-te) and me(-te) to speak about oneself as in a mirror. Other words that complete this picture are ur$_5$, which refers to lungs (often employed in parallel with ša$_3$), and lipiš, another word meaning more or less "heart". The Akkadian vocabulary is less rich in this respect than the Sumerian: it uses *ramānu* to describe oneself; *libbu* "heart" is mostly employed in expressions of emotion.

49 The Akkadian *kabattu* "liver" is not a translation of Sumerian bar "outside, periphery". The Sumerian opposition ša$_3$ / bar corresponds to the Akkadian *libbu* / *kabattu*; and it is logically artificial, indeed wrong, to make the equation ša$_3$ = *libbu* and bar = *kabattu*.

50 By endocentric extension, I understand everything that adds something to a concept without changing its syntactic function. For example, the adjective "big" in the sentence "He is a man with a big heart" is an *endocentric extension* because it only modifies the word "heart" (one can say "He is a man with heart"). In the same sentence, one cannot replace "big heart" with "sick" (to say "He is a man with a sick heart" has no sense). "Sick" in this case is an *exocentric extension* in relationship with "heart", because it requires a transformation of the sentence's structure ("This man has a sick heart"), see Martinet 1960: 131f.

verb.[51] For example, $ša_3$ gig lipiš gig (corresponding to Akkadian *libbu* with *marāṣu* "to be ill, sick"), which expresses sadness and trouble, $ša_3$ ḫul (*libbu* with *lemēnu* "to be bad"), $ša_3$ $dab_{(5)}$-ba, $ša_3$ $ib_2$-ba, $ša_3$ mer-ra for anger, irritation and an expression only attested in Akkadian: *libbu* with *parādum* "to tremble, to be afraid". Among positive emotions, $ša_3$ $ḫul_2$ (*libbu* with *ḫadû*) "to enjoy", $ša_3$ ḫuĝ (with *nâḫu* "to calm, to soothe"), etc. The Akkadian idiom combining *libbu* with *nasāḫu* "to tear out" is an expression of despair. In Old Assyrian letters, the common idiom *lā libbi ilimma* means litterally "against (the heart =) the will of the god" or more vaguely "sadly, unfortunately".

Other stylistic particularities are typical of certain periods, like the diverse formulas that are found almost exclusively in a corpus of inscriptions of the Old Babylonian king Warad-Sîn of Larsa. These repetitive expressions make it possible to analyze similarities and variations in the grammatical construction of the sentence:

Warad-Sîn 3:35-36
$niĝ_2$-AK-ba-$še_3$ $^{d}$Nergal diĝir-ra-na $ḫe_2$-en-ši-$ḫul_2$
"May Nergal his god rejoice for what has been done!"

Warad-Sîn 10:40-42
$niĝ_2$-AK-ba-$še_3$ $^{d}$Nanna lugal-$ĝu_{10}$ $ḫe_2$-ma-$ḫul_2$-e
"May Nanna my king rejoice over me for what has been done!"

Warad-Sîn 11:14-15 (transitive *marû*):
$niĝ_2$-AK-$ĝu_{10}$-$še_3$ $ḫe_2$-mu-$ḫul_2$-e
"(Inanna) rejoices indeed over me for what I have done".[52]

Also typical of certain texts is the repetition of terms in parallel sentences characteristic of liturgies:

Eršaḫunĝa to Anu 14-16[53]

| | |
|---|---|
| $ša_3$ mer-a-zu | ki-bi-$še_3$ $de_3$-ra-ab-$gi_4$-$gi_4$ |
| $ša_3$ $ib_2$-ba-zu | ki-bi-$še_3$ $de_3$-ra-ab-$gi_4$-$gi_4$ |
| $ša_3$ $ib_2$ si-ga-a-zu | ki-bi-$še_3$ $de_3$-ra-ab-$gi_4$-$gi_4$ |

[51] There are many ways to express emphasis in the Mesopotamian languages: for example the use of the reflexive pronoun $ni_2$-te = *ramānu* to emphasize the subject of the sentence, or the independent personal pronouns in Akkadian or modal clauses with the prefix ši- in Sumerian used to express an emphatic assertion; cf. Jagersma 2010: 578f.

[52] Frayne 1990: 207, 216, 218. Warad-Sîn developed a very personal style with new formulas in his inscriptions. The three fixed expressions found almost only there show grammatical variations from the standard construction of $ḫul_2$ with the comitative: In Warad-Sîn 3, the conjugation of $ḫul_2$ is intransitive with a terminative infix {ši}; in Warad-Sîn 10, $ḫul_2$ is intransitive and contains the infix dative 1st. Pers. Sg. {ma}; in Warad-Sîn 11, the conjugation is transitive and mu-ē = me is an absolutive construction.

[53] Cf. Maul 1988: 75.

"May your angry heart turn back to its (former) place!
May your furious heart turn back to its (former) place!
May the fury of your darkened heart turn back to its (former) place!"

It is also typical that in letters from angry senders sentences such as "you are my father, you are my lord" are repeated several times. Letters also contain oaths sworn by the gods and rhetorical questions.[54]

Such constructions are well known in Arabic and in Akkadian but are much more difficult to find in Sumerian. Style in Sumerian texts, already tackled by Attinger in his grammar (1993: 315-318), would merit further development.

Emotion words reflect, and pass on cultural models, and these models, in turn, reflect and pass on values, that is, preoccupations and frames of reference for the society (or speech community) within which they have evolved. In studies of the vocabulary of values (good/bad), and of words describing oneself ($ni_2$(-te)/me(-te) = *ramānu*), metaphors and stylistic constructions are secondary to the analysis of the discourse on emotion, but they do raise significant interesting issues. The lexicon of words for values, of description of oneself and metaphors, is quite similar on the whole to the process observed for the words of emotion. Information gathered with a view to these perspectives may serve as an element of comparison with the lexicon of emotion words. They give researchers who are focused on "purely emotional vocabulary" access to a vocabulary that does not fit in the same frame but touches it closely.

## *4. Conclusion*

The designation "discourse on emotion" derives from critical and theoretical analysis of material mainly present in Sumerian, Akkadian, and bilingual literature. The texts show that a vocabulary of emotion existed in the languages of Mesopotamia. What are the implications of this conclusion? Starting from elementary questions concerning translation that can be misleading as well as instructive, I have tried to understand which ideas the languages of Mesopotamia conveyed with a specific terminology. The path to discover this cultural phenomenon is difficult as one has to be careful not to oversimplify the picture of a cultural environment that did not correspond to a modern one. The dangers that one can hardly avoid are, following Lutz (1988: 218), of three sorts: we interpret emotion as identical to

[54] Such analyses exist in other fields. Müller (1993) studies the phraseology and stylistic techniques in classical Arabic, attempting to formulate in abstract terms the repetitive expressions containing either a verb of emotion or all kinds of verbs – these latter being summarized under the heading "to do"; compare also the review of Ullmann 1995: 214-216.

ours, we see them as radically opposed to ours, or we understand them as less numerous and less intense compared to modern emotional normality. The intensity of an expression of emotion can vary depending on social codes, as has been shown for example by Briggs (1970) and others. Emotions are judgements that require social validation or negotiation to be realized, thereby linking emotion with social structure.[55] They are closely linked to the culture in which they are expressed, but they are not a homogeneous class. They can also change in the history of one cultural group, as Harkins and Wierzbicka have illustrated in the shift in the Shakespearian "wrath" to the modern "anger" which reflects the democratization of a society and the overturning of the feudal order. Because emotions are embedded in socially constructed categories, the "truth" of emotions (as of all subjective entities) is problematic.[56]

Emotional experience is almost endlessly mediated through language. It is not possible to give a complete meaning list of the emotion words of the Mesopotamians as we are constrained by the available texts. We can only try to understand how and with which terms they expressed emotions, showing in which contexts and with which syntactic constructions they employed them. We must accept the assumption that the structure of sentences describing emotions reflects the structure of the world and, in particular, "emotion's object-directedness". Rather than "re-constructing" emotions, the historian must "de-construct" all the expressions incorporated into the very particular matrix of emotions in written texts and make a chart of all words found in the sources. Such an approach has the advantage of considering not the person who feels, but rather the discourse on emotion itself. To approach this discourse as an object of study is to address a cultural feature, and it allows a certain distance with respect to that object.

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55 Solomon (1979: 31) pictures emotion as a "system of judgements". Emotions are active ways of "structuring our experience".

56 If the function of the object of emotion is the *cause* or the explanation of the emotion, the object can affects the *truth* of the sentences in which they are embedded, cf. Nissenbaum 1985: 23.

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# Emotionen in Text, Sprache und materialen Bildern
# Eine Skizze aus Sicht der Metaphernanalyse

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## *1. Metaphernanalyse*

Wer sich auf das Stichwort Metaphernanalyse einlässt, muss zunächst klären, von welchem Theoriehintergrund und von welcher Position aus von Metaphern gesprochen wird. Für den vorliegenden Beitrag gehe ich von dem inzwischen fast schon klassisch gewordenen Metapherngrundkonzept von Lakoff / Johnson[1] aus, das sich im Horizont der Kognitiven Forschung bewegt und in diesem Rahmen vielfach bearbeitet und variiert worden ist. Entscheidend sind dabei folgende Grundüberlegungen, die ich im Wortlaut von Lakoff / Johnson selbst anführen möchte:

> „Damit man sich vorstellen kann, was es für ein Konzept heißt, metaphorisch zu sein und darüber hinaus eine Alltagshandlung zu strukturieren, beginnen wir mit dem Konzept ARGUMENTIEREN und der konzeptuellen Metapher ARGUMENTIEREN IST KRIEG. Diese Metapher schlägt sich in unserer Alltagssprache in einer Fülle von Ausdrücken nieder.
>
> ARGUMENTIEREN IST KRIEG: Ihre Behauptungen sind *unhaltbar*. / Er *griff jeden Schwachpunkt* in meiner Argumentation *an*. / Seine Kritik *traf ins Schwarze*. / Ich *schmetterte* sein Argument *ab*. / Ich habe noch nie eine Auseinandersetzung mit ihm *gewonnen*. / Sie sind anderer Meinung? Nun, *schießen Sie los*! / Wenn du nach dieser Strategie vorgehst, wird er dich *vernichten*. / Er *machte* alle meine Argumente *nieder*.
>
> […] Auch wenn es sich nicht um einen physischen Kampf handelt, so ist es doch ein verbaler Kampf; und die Argumentationsstruktur spiegelt dieses Kampfgeschehen – Angriff, Verteidigung, Gegenangriff usw. – wider. In diesem Sinne ist die konzeptuelle Metapher ARGUMENTIEREN IST KRIEG eine Metapher, nach der wir in unserer Kultur leben; sie strukturiert die Handlungen, die wir beim Argumentieren ausführen.
>
> Stellen wir uns einmal eine Kultur vor, in der man den Argumentationsvorgang nicht in kriegerischen Termini sieht, bei dem niemand gewinnt oder verliert, bei dem niemand an Attacke oder Verteidigung denkt, bei dem man weder an Boden gewinnt noch verliert. Stellen wir uns einmal eine Kultur vor, in der man den Argumentationsvorgang als Tanz betrachtet, bei dem Argumentierende als Künstler auftreten und das Ziel haben, sich harmonisch und ästhetisch zu präsentieren. […] Diesen Unterschied der

[1] Lakoff / Johnson $^{6}$2008.

> Kulturen könnten wir vielleicht am neutralsten beschreiben, wenn wir sagen, dass unsere Form des Diskurses in Kampfbegriffen strukturiert ist und ihre Diskursform in Begriffen des Tanzes.“[2]

Eine konzeptuelle Metapher ist also ein Gebilde „nach der wir in unserer Kultur leben […], sie strukturiert die Handlungen, die wir […] ausführen“ (aus dem Zitat oben) und sie strukturiert das „Wissen“, die Auffassungen über Dinge, den gesamten epistemischen Bereich der betreffenden Kultur.

Als Metaphern sind dabei, wenn es um sprachliche Metaphern geht, alle möglichen bildlichen und bildhaften Aussagen, Ausdrücke, Figuren, Wendungen, Sätze, Satzteile, Metaphern, Metonymien u.v.a.m. heranzuziehen, die selbst keinerlei poetischen Anspruch haben müssen (siehe das Beispiel oben für ARGUMENTIEREN IST KRIEG) und bei denen man immer sehr offene Definitionen nehmen kann (so kommt es bei den Metaphern im engeren Sinne etwa nicht darauf an, ob sie eine Vergleichspartikel haben oder nicht). Diese Metaphern können in bestimmten Sprach- bzw. Textcorpora aufgesucht werden und als Grundlage von Metaphernanalysen dienen.

Indem die konzeptuellen Metaphern darauf abheben, den epistemischen Schatz einer Sprachgemeinschaft / Kultur zu heben, dienen sie als Erkenntnismittel auch für das Arbeiten im historischen Bereich. Nicht zuletzt können mit diesem Zugriff „Mentalitäten“, „vielenteils *unbewußte* […] *Prägungen*, denen Menschen unterliegen“[3], erforscht werden im Sinne der Historischen Anthropologie.[4] Mentalitäten werden üblicherweise definiert als „kategoriale Formen des Denkens, die als eine Art ›historischer Apriori‹ dem Denken selbst entzogen sind“, „Mentalitäten umschreiben kognitive, ethische und affektive Dispositionen“.[5] Mentalitäten selbst sind nur historisch zu verstehen: „Mentalitäten wandeln sich historisch, sie sind kulturell unterschiedlich. Mentalitäten sind keine Konstanten, sind nicht Singular, sondern Plural.“[6] Da Mentalitäten als „kategorialen Formen des Denkens“, als eine Art „historische Apriori dem Denken selbst entzogen sind“ (Raulff, vgl. Anm. 5), sprechen sie sich nicht explizit aus und können daher als explizite Rede nicht aufgesucht werden. Mentalitäten sind „etwas, auf das Menschen keinen direkten Zugriff haben; sie [sind] ein weitgehend unbewußt wirkender anthropolo-

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2 Lakoff / Johnson [6]2008: 12-13.

3 Wagner [2]2011: 59.

4 Vgl. Tanner [2]2008; Wulf 2004; Winterling 2006; Conermann / von Hees, 2007; Wulf 2012; Habermas 2012: 153-271.

5 Raulff 1987: 9-10. Die Rede vom Denken ist schillernd; hier ist das überindividuelle Denken gemeint, das über individuelle und idiographisch zu interpretierende Lebenszeugnisse hinausgeht, das prägend für eine Sprach- oder sogar Sprachengemeinschaft ist.

6 Dressel 1996: 263.

gischer Zustand", wie Gernot Böhme es genannt hat.[7] Trotzdem sind gerade sie für die Erkundung des historischen Selbstverständnisses des Menschen, zu dem auch seine Gefühlswelt gehört, von grundlegender Wichtigkeit.[8]

## *2. Metaphernanalyse als methodischer Zugang zur Erforschung von Emotionen*

Genau an dieser Stelle hat nun *ein*[9] Zugang in der neueren historischen Emotionenforschung angesetzt und konzeptuelle Metaphern herausgearbeitet, die Aufschluss über das kulturspezifische Verständnis von Emotionen[10] geben: Solche Metaphernkonzepte führen zu beschreibbaren Mentalitäten, die auch im Bereich von Emotionen, Emotionalität und dem Verhältnis von Körper und Emotion prägend sind.

Kövecses, Rolf u.a. haben das am Beispiel von neueren Sprachen erarbeitet.[11] Hier kann ich nur einige der Ergebnisse andeuten, um das Prinzip dieser Forschungen deutlich zu machen. In neueren Sprachen finden sich zum Ausdruck von Emotionen in großer Häufigkeit Metaphern, Bildausdrücke etc., die zur konzeptuellen Metapher des BEHÄLTERS/CONTAINERS bei Emotionen im sprachlichen Bereich führen. Es gibt dabei vielfältig variierende und häufig vorkommende Formulierungen mit den Ausdrücken *unter Dampf stehen* oder *Platzen* (vor Wut, Ärger usw.) / *aus sich herausgehen* (vor Liebe) / *angefüllt sein* (mit Liebe) / (Hass) *unter Verschluss halten* / *voll sein* (von Liebe, Angst, Hass usw.) u.v.a.m. Alle diese Metaphern, bildhaften Ausdrücke usw. führen auf die hinter diesen Einzelwendungen stehende konzeptuelle Metapher EMOTIONEN BEFINDEN SICH IM BEHÄLTER/GEFÄSS/CONTAINER:

- unter Dampf stehen → Behälter droht zu platzen
- platzen → Behälter steht unter Druck und platzt
- aus sich herausgehen → Behälter läuft über/aus
- unter Verschluss halten → Emotionen befinden sich im Behälter mit geschlossenem Deckel
- voll sein → Behälter ist voll, angefüllt mit Emotionen

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7 Böhme 1985: 264; vgl. dazu auch Dressel 1996: 263-270; van Dülmen 2001: 21 schlägt den Begriff der „kollektiven Lebensvorstellungen" vor.

8 Vgl. Wagner ²2011: 59-60.

9 Es ist *ein* möglicher Zugang, der nicht beansprucht, dass er der einzig mögliche ist!

10 Zur Auffassung der Emotionen als relativ-kulturspezifische und nicht universale Konstrukte Bender 2009: 293-310.

11 Kövecses 1990; Rolf 1994: 131-137.

Die Gefäß-/Behältermetapher ist die Schlüsselmetapher für das neuzeitlich-westliche Körper- und Emotionenverständnis, die Befunde im Deutschen entsprechen dem der meisten europäischen Sprachen.

Das hinter dieser Metapher stehende Konzept bzw. die hinter dieser konzeptuellen Metapher stehende Mentalität setzt voraus, dass sich Emotionen in unserem Innern befinden, dass sie aus uns heraus entspringen, dass Körper und Person die Emotionen einschließen. Ausdrücke, die zur Behältermetapher zu zählen sind, finden sich bei der Verbalisierung verschiedenster Emotionen.

Dass wir Emotionen mit der Behältermetapher zum Ausdruck bringen, geschieht in aller Regel unbewusst. Die dahinterstehende Konzeption oder Mentalität gehört zu den unbewussten Prägungen, sie stellt eine Grösse dar, auf die „Menschen keinen direkten Zugriff haben"; die „ein weitgehend unbewußt wirkender ‚anthropologischer Zustand'" ist, wie oben in Abschnitt 1 ausgeführt.

Den Körper zum Gefäß gemacht zu haben, die Emotionen in das Innere verlagert zu haben, ist das Ergebnis einer über Jahrhunderte zu verfolgenden Kulturarbeit, die Hermann Schmitz in seinem Werk „System der Philosophie" eindrucksvoll beschrieben hat.[12] Vor allem in den Teilbänden „Der Gefühlsraum" und „Der Leib" hat Schmitz das „eigenleibliche Spüren" einer umfassenden phänomenologischen Analyse unterzogen. Böhme fasst die historische Arbeit von Schmitz und den dahinterstehenden Prozess folgendermaßen zusammen:

> „[…] in der Philosophie- und Theoriegeschichte spiegelt sich ein zivilisatorischer Prozeß, in welchem die […] Erfahrungen der andrängenden Macht der Gefühle und des Leibes gebrochen werden zugunsten der Auszeichnung, praktischen Behauptung und Selbstermächtigung eines ‚Subjekts': dessen Leistungsstärke ist funktional darauf abgestellt, eben das Andrängende und Durchwehende gefühlshafter und leiblicher Dynamiken zu ‚introjizieren', d.h. vor allem, sie als endogene bzw. autonome Regungen zu verinnerlichen. Nur unter dieser Voraussetzung der ‚intrapsychischen' Deutung können wir von einem Seeleninnenraum sprechen, der das Leibliche wie das Atmosphärische absorbiert."[13]

Emotionen sind nach diesem Prozess, der in Griechenland beginnt und sich bis in alle europäischen und an der europäischen Tradition teilhabenden Kulturen (daher „western pattern") zieht, nicht mehr „Mächte, die den Fühlenden unwiderstehlich ergreifen und durchwirken (weswegen der Fühlende den Gefühlen gegenüber in eine eigentümlich exzentrische und passive Position geriet)".[14] Emotionen sind nun *interiorisiert*, im Gefäß des Körpers eingeschlossen und damit auch kontrollierbar.

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12 Schmitz (1967) $^{2}$1988; (1969) $^{2}$1981 sowie (1978) $^{2}$1989.
13 Böhme 1993: 413f.
14 Böhme 1997: 531.

Diese „Mentalität“ prägt die Vorstellungen, die in den kulturellen Codes gespeicherten Kognitionen und damit natürlich auch die Versprachlichungen bis heute, zumindest im „western pattern“.[15]

## *3. Metaphern und Mentalitäten in materialen Bildern am Beispiel der Emotionen*

### *3.1 Gefäß-/Behältermetapher im „western pattern“*

Menschliche Lebensäußerungen drücken sich nicht nur in Sprache aus, sondern auch vielfältig in anderen Medien, Zeichensystemen, Handlungen u.a.m. Es liegt daher auf der Hand, wenn ein kognitiv-mentalitätsgeschichtlicher Ansatz gewählt ist, anzunehmen, dass Mentalitäten einen ähnlichen Zusammenhang mit anderen „Zeichensystem“ haben, wie er sich am Beispiel der Sprache zeigen lässt.[16] Uns interessieren hier nur materiale Bilder, die wir parallel zu sprachlichen Zeichen und Texten betrachten wollen. Die Grundthese, die für den vorliegenden Zusammenhang wichtig ist, lautet demnach: Dieselben Mentalitäten, die sich in konzeptuellen Metaphern ausformen, prägen nicht nur sprachliche Bilder, sondern auch materiale Bilder.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Mentalität, Konzept, Metapher | → (Zeichensystem a) | – Sprache |
| | → (Zeichensystem b) | – materiale Bilder |
| | → (Zeichensystem …) | – … |

Das mag einfach klingen, würde aber bedeuten, dass man ebenso wie sprachliche auch materiale Bilder heranziehen kann, um Emotionen und die dahinterstehenden prägenden Mentalitäten zu erforschen.

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15 Für andere Emotionskonzepte vgl. Plamper 2012 passim.

16 Die Grundauffassung, dass sich kognitive Sachverhalte in Metaphern innerhalb verschiedener Medien ausdrücken, ist von Anbeginn an ein grosser Vorteil der kognitiven Metaphern-Theorie von Lakoff / Johnson gewesen, auch wenn Lakoff / Johnson selbst ihre eigenen Studien häufig von sprachlichen Sachverhalten her entwickelt haben. Das Grundprinzip einer Metapher („the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another“ Lakoff / Johnson 1980, 5) ist nicht auf das Medium Sprache beschränkt. Dies wurde schon lange gesehen und thematisiert, vgl. Danto 1984 und Carroll 1994. Lakoff / Johnson selbst haben es so formuliert: „Unsere [...] wichtigste Aussage ist die, daß die Metapher nicht nur eine Frage der Sprache ist, also von Worten allein.“ (Lakoff / Johnson $^{6}$2008) Sie gehen davon aus, dass „menschliche Denkprozesse“ bzw. „das menschliche Konzeptsystem“ (a.a.O.) metaphorisch strukturiert sind; nicht nur sprachliche, sondern auch alle weiteren, auch medial anderen, Hervorbringungen von menschlichen Lebensäusserungen sind daher von vergleichbaren Metaphern und Konzepten (in der Terminologie der historischen Anthropologie: Mentalitäten) bestimmt. Alle medialen Ausformungen können daher herangezogen werden, um das „Konzeptsystem“ zu analysieren.

Ich will das zunächst am Beispiel des „western pattern“ zeigen. Hier gibt es, anders als im hebräisch-altorientalischen Bereich (s.u. Abschnitt 3.2) eine ganz zentrale konzeptuelle Metapher, eben die oben kurz beschriebene Gefäß-/Behältermetapher.

In der nachfolgenden kleinen Reihe von materialen Bildern lässt sich nun gut erkennen, dass sich die Behältermetaphervorstellung auch durch sie bzw. in ihnen ausdrücken lässt:

In Abb. 1, die in einer comic-haften Zeichnung einen Menschen darstellt, der von Wut oder Ärger erfasst ist, wird zu dem zeichenhaft-bildlichen Ausdrucksmittel gegriffen, das Platzen des Gefäßes, den Überdruck, unter dem der Behälter steht, so darzustellen, dass wie bei einem Dampfkessel oder Dampfdrucktopf der Überdruck in Form von Dampfwolken gezeichnet wird, die energiegeladen aus den Überdruckventilen „Ohren“ heraustreten:

Abb. 1. Aus: https://forum.vodafone.de/t5/Internet-Phone/Bandbreitenengpass-Warum/td-p/1053297, aufgerufen am 10. April 2016.

Noch deutlicher und noch „technischer“ auf den Gefäßsachverhalt ist das nächste Bild bezogen:

Abb. 2. Aus: http://www.noz.de/lokales/bramsche/artikel/478398/jana-walczyk-aus-bramsche-und-ihr-buch-nicht-nur-fur-kinder#gallery&0&0&478398, aufgerufen am 10. April 2016.

In Abb. 2 wird ein menschlicher Kopf in Form eines Gefäßes, eines Wasserkessels gezeichnet. In dem begleitenden Text eines Rezipienten heißt es dazu: „Das Gefühl kennt jeder! Wut kocht hoch, man glaubt, gleich zu platzen. Nur eine Klitzekleinigkeit noch, dann geht der Deckel hoch.“[17] Sprachliche Formulierung und bildliches Formulieren derselben konzeptuellen Metapher sind hier direkt nebeneinandergesetzt. Mit Blick auf die konzeptuelle Metapher kann aber nun festgehalten werden, dass es wirklich dieselbe Metapher ist – der Mensch ist der Behälter für Emotionen –, die ebenso gut aus materialen Bildern wie aus Sprache zu erkennen ist!

Diese Bildreihe lässt sich leicht fortsetzen und variieren. Im nächsten Bild (Abb. 3) verschmelzen die aus dem Gefäß heraustretenden Dampfwolken mit einer berstenden kugelförmigen Bombe (Abb. 4). Beides für sich sind Realisierungsvarianten derselben konzeptuellen Gefäßmetapher. Der Mensch ist hier anders als oben, wo der Kopf im Vordergrund stand, auf die kugelhafte Gefäßform reduziert, was dieselbe Deutung hervorruft wie eine zunächst ja gar nicht anthropomorphe zu bersten drohende Kanonenkugel, die aber im Kontext der Gefäßvorstellung zum stellvertretenden Zeichen für einen vor Emotion platzenden/berstenden Menschen wird:

Abb. 3. Aus: http://www.julianeechternkamp.com/de/life-coaching/wut-eine-anleitung-zur-beherrschung-dieser-destruktiven-emotion/, aufgerufen am 10. April 2016.

Abb. 4. Aus: http://www.hauptstadtlaeufer.de/tag/istaf, aufgerufen am 10. April 2016.

[17] Über Bilder von Jana Walczyk zu finden auf der Seite: http://www.noz.de/lokales/-bramsche/artikel/478398/jana-walczyk-aus-bramsche-und-ihr-buch-nicht-nur-fur-kinder#gallery&0&0&478398, aufgerufen am 10. April 2016.

Die Ersetzung allein des Kopfes durch eine bald berstende kugelförmige Bombe gibt es auch, hier noch durch affektive Gesten unterstrichen, vgl. Abb. 5.:

Abb. 5. Hans-Jürgen Krahl, „Bombe, Wut, wütend, explodieren, Angestellter, Stress“, Datei: #22632652, Lizenz M/fotolia, aus: https://de.fotolia.com/id/22632652, aufgerufen am 25. April 2016.

Auch mit den Mitteln photorealistischer Darstellungen sind die Vorstellungen der Gefäßmetapher einholbar, sei es, dass es um bearbeitete Bilder (Abb. 6) oder andere (Abb. 7) geht: Die Inszenierung vom Drinnen nach Draußen, vom Inneren des (unter Druck, Dampf, emotionaler Ladung etc. stehenden) Gefäßes zum Bersten, Entweichen und Hinausschreien dieses Druckes ist auf den ersten Blick erkennbar:

Abb. 6. Aus: http://karrierebibel.de/wut/, aufgerufen am 10. April 2016.

Abb. 7. Aus: http://www.fitforfun.de/beauty-wellness/gesundheit/wut-niedriger-sozialer-status-macht-wuetend_aid_14489.html, aufgerufen am 10. April 2016.

Ohne weiteres wäre es nun möglich, diese Reihe auch mit Ausgriffen in historische Bereiche und auch anspruchsvolle bildnerische Ausdrucksformen zu verlängern, vgl. Abb. 8.

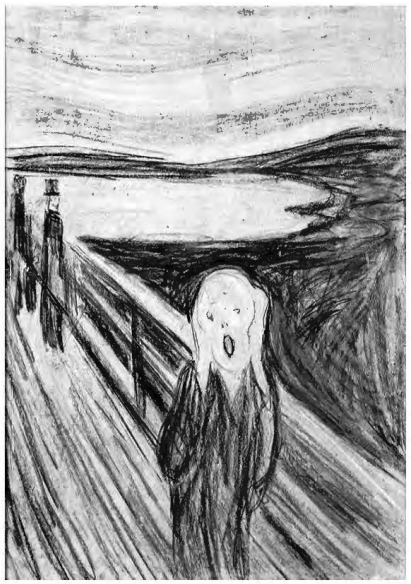

Abb. 8. Edvard Munch: Skrik / Der Schrei, 1893, Buntstift auf Karton, Munchmuseet / Munch-Museum, Oslo, Reg. Nr. MM.M.00122b, © Munchmuseet.

Bei den hier angeführten Bildern und der zu erörternden methodischen Frage ist es zunächst aber überhaupt nicht entscheidend, welche ästhetischen, künstlerischen oder sonstigen Qualitäten ein materiales Bild hat, sondern es steht einzig die Überlegung im Raum, dass von der Analyse materialer Bilder her ebenfalls auf konzeptuelle Metaphern zugegangen

werden kann. Prinzipiell, so würde ich die These nun formulieren, ist die Bildanalyse auch ein möglicher Zugang zu konzeptuellen Metaphern, auch solchen, die im Zusammenhang mit Emotionen wichtig sind, ein Zugang, der sicher in je eigenen Bildkulturen und überhaupt je eigenen Gesamtkulturen mit je eigenen epistemisch-kognitiven Systemen usw. andere Ergebnisse mit sich bringt, der aber unbeschränkt von Kultur und Epoche als Frage an materiale Bilder herangetragen werden kann.

### *3.2 Metaphern in der Emotionenanalyse des Hebräischen bzw. des Alten Israel*

In verschiedenen Forschungsprojekten und Publikationen habe ich mit meiner Forschungsgruppe in den letzten Jahren den Versuch unternommen, die metaphernorientierte Analyse für die Erforschung historischer Emotionen im Alten Testament/Alten Israel zu nutzen. Es ist hier nicht der Ort, ausführlich auf die Ergebnisse dieser Forschung einzugehen, dafür sei auf die entsprechenden Publikationen verwiesen.[18] Aber zusammenfassend kann hier formuliert werden, dass sich die Ergebnisse vom Befund des „western pattern" signifikant unterscheiden. Der bedeutsamste Unterschied ist in der Anwendung der Behältermetapher zutage getreten: Ist sie im „western pattern" die absolut häufigste und wichtigste konzeptuelle Metapher, so kommt sie im Alten Testament auch eingedenk mehrerer hundert analysierten Belegstellen nur in ganz seltenen Ausnahmefällen vor. Sicher lässt sich sagen, dass sie nicht als ein häufiges oder gar zentrales Verstehenskonzept für die Verhältnisbestimmung von Körper/Gefäß und Emotion/Inhalt verstanden werden kann. Das führt auf die Spur, dass im Hebräischen andere Verhältnisbestimmungen für Person/Körper und Emotion entscheidend sind, andere konzeptuelle Metaphernbereiche vorkommen, die schlussendlich ein anderes Emotionengrundverständnis nahelegen als im „western pattern". Bisherige Studien haben hier eine Vielfalt ergeben, es gibt wohl andere Bestimmungen der Körperinnen- und Körperaußengrenze, es kommt die Vorstellung von außen kommenden Emotionen („Geist der Eifersucht") ins Spiel, möglicherweise sind die Emotionen bzw. die emotionale Sphäre, in die Menschen eintreten, mit den sie auslösenden Anlässen (kausal?) verklammert u.a.m. Bestimmte Aspekte der Emotionen treten über die Metaphern deutlich in den Vordergrund: Das Heiße, Flüssige, Feurige von Zorn und Grimm, beim Zorn Gottes das sturmhaft Brausende, alle Dämme Einreißende, über den Menschen Hereinbrechende u.a.m. Hier sind aber die Forschungen noch dabei, sich voranzutasten und es liegt noch etliche Arbeit voraus.

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[18] Wagner [2]2011; Wagner 2012: 27-68; Müller 2014: 219-237; Kipfer 2016: 15-79.

Für die zukünftige Forschung sollten aber unbedingt materiale Bilder einbezogen werden, die in ähnlicher Weise wie in 3.1 angeführt mit sprachlichen Sachverhalten übereinstimmende (oder durchaus auch eigene) konzeptuelle Metaphernbereiche ausdrücken können und daher hilfreich zur Ergründung der kognitiv-epistemischen Strukturen sind.

Ein erstes, allerdings negatives Ergebnis gibt es schon: Nach einer ersten Durchsicht von IPIAO („Die Ikonographie Palästinas/Israels und der Alte Orient“) existiert eine vergleichbare Darstellung mit Elementen der oben beschriebenen Behälter-Metapher zum Ausdruck von Emotionen, die auf der Linie der in Abschnitt 3.1 angeführten Bilder liegt, nicht.[19] Das liegt aber nun vor allem daran, dass die Behältermetapher im Emotionenkontext des Alten Israel nicht konstitutiv ist. Dass man aber für die eigenen, sich in spezifischen konzeptuellen Metaphern ausdrückenden, Emotionenkonzepte der altisraelitischen Kultur (und ähnlich dürfte es für die altorientalisch-ägyptischen Kulturen sein) auch zugehörige eigene Bilddarstellungen auf dem Wege der Metaphernanalyse finden kann, ist m.E. methodisch möglich und eher wahrscheinlich als ausgeschlossen.

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[19] Was nicht ausschließt, dass der Körper im Alten Israel in anderen Zusammenhängen als den emotionalen durchaus als Gefäß betrachtet worden sein kann, etwa kann der Mensch hinsichtlich der Weisheit „voll“ sein (Ez 28,12), oder hinsichtlich des Segens „voll“ sein (Dtn 33,23) u.a. Vgl. zur Gefäßmetaphorik des Körpers: Kipfer / Schroer 2015.

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# Emotion and the Ancient Arts: Visualizing, Materializing, and Producing States of Being*

Karen SONIK

## *1. Introduction*

In the Standard Babylonian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the most famous of the literary narratives extant from Mesopotamia, events are driven by emotions so towering that they overwhelm all caution, reasoned judgment, and sensible action.[1] One of the most critical episodes in the composition, on which all subsequent events turn, relates in intimate first person the devastation of the hero Gilgamesh upon the death of his closest friend and companion, Enkidu:

> I shall mourn Enkidu, my friend,
> like a professional mourning woman I shall lament bitterly.
> The axe at my side, in which my arm trusted,
> the sword of my belt, the shield in front of me;
> my festive garment, the girdle of my delight:
> a wicked wind has risen up against me and robbed me.
> (VIII 44-49; George 2003: 644-45)

The hero's grief for his dead companion, expressed both in word and tender deed, is as deeply affecting for the modern audience as, presumably, for the ancient one – even if the specific ways in which it is experienced today may diverge somewhat from those of the past.[2] Entangled in a complex constellation of feelings, communicated through vivid and visceral imagery, Gilgamesh's anguish reverberates through and provides the impetus for the remarkable events subsequently recounted in Tablets VIII-XI of the

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1 One might contrast it, in this respect, with narratives such as *The Return of Lugalbanda*, which follows a hero carefully considering his actions and their implications rather than acting on the basis of emotion, appetite, whim, or desire.

2 See, for example, the discussion of the Greek hero Philoctetes in the main text below.

epic. It is the spur driving the hero on to attempt his last, great quest: the vanquishing of death itself, the hated enemy that has robbed him of his companion and that – as Gilgamesh recognizes for what seems the first time[3] – relentlessly stalks him also. It encompasses and is associated with:

a) An initial clinging to hope and desperate denial of the implications of Enkidu's failure to rouse (VIII 55-58).[4] The hope is crushed and the denial itself graphically and finally repudiated by the material decay of Enkidu's corpse, encapsulated in the vivid image – three times repeated in the epic so that its visceral impact both on Gilgamesh and on the audience may be fully realized (X 60, 137, 237) – of the maggot dropping from its nostril.
b) A demonstration of love and tender care for what little remains – though this is little indeed. Gilgamesh covers Enkidu's body, "(veiling) his face like a bride" (VIII 59; George 2003: 654-55);[5] bitterly laments Enkidu's death "like a professional mourning woman" (VIII 45; George 2003: 654-55); and oversees the making of a glorious funerary statue of his dead friend (VIII 65-72). This sensitive regard is all the more striking in one otherwise so explicitly given to unthinking and violent action.[6]
c) The shattering of Gilgamesh's fundamental perception not only of his own self and place in the world but also of the very order, as established by the gods, of the world itself (VIII 44-49). On Enkidu's death, Gilgamesh abandons *both* his responsibilities *and* (even if only temporarily) his status as king of Uruk,[7] an alteration that is marked physically, in

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3 In the Sumerian narratives *Gilgamesh and Huwawa* A (GHA) and B (GHB), Gilgamesh's realization that he too will fall victim to death comes already prior to the hero's quest to the Cedar Forest (this is the first quest he undertakes in the SB *Gilgamesh Epic*). See further main text below.

4 Both the hope and the denial are even more poignantly expressed in the OB Akkadian epic, in which Gilgamesh refuses to give Enkidu's body over for burial for a full seven days and seven nights, clinging instead to futile hope: "Maybe my friend will rise at my cry!" (OB VA+BM 9'; George 2003: 278-79).

5 I am not inclined to read this as referencing a sexual relationship between the two heroes. While such a reading is not absolutely precluded (Mesopotamian wordplay and humor being what it is), the power of this sharply drawn verbal image would seem to reside in the sheer incongruity of this tender action by one who has hitherto occupied and is properly situated in an entirely different (boisterous, noisy, and violent) sphere of life.

6 The topic of the royal demonstration (Bonatz in this volume) and repression of emotion (Jacquet 2012: 125-26) is one that seems ripe for further investigation in the context of Mesopotamia. On the topic of grief and proper demonstrations of sorrow, it is also worth reading more generally Jacquet 2012: 125-28. See also, albeit with reference to Classic Mayan imagery, the studies of Marcus 1974 and Houston 2001 on restrained, regulated, and calculated royal (and other) bodily expression.

7 In this abandonment of his kingship, however temporary, Gilgamesh denies significantly more than social status: the institution of kingship is a divinely established one, and the king stands at the point of contact between humans and their gods. Gilgamesh himself, too, is something more than merely human, repeatedly identified as two-thirds divine

body and garb, as well as socially, in his willful isolation from those who might guide and guard him.[8] More importantly, the hero embarks on his (futile) quest for immortality, which the gods have deliberately and explicitly denied to all mortals save one, the flood hero Uta-napishti.

d) Near crippling fear at the recognition of his own mortality (X 61-62). The oblivion that has claimed Enkidu – "[My friend, whom I love, has turned] to clay, / my friend Enkidu, whom I love, has [turned to] clay. / [Shall not I be like] him and also lie down, / [never to rise] again, through all eternity?'" (X 68-71; George 2003: 682-83) – inexorably awaits Gilgamesh as well (X 145-148, 245-248). The hero is described as "weeping bitterly as he roamed the wild" lamenting "I shall die, and shall I not then be like Enkidu? / Sorrow has entered my heart. / I became afraid of death, so go roaming the wild" (IX 2-5; George 2003: 666-67).

e) Physical mortification and degradation as explicit signifiers of mourning and memorialization, so that Gilgamesh promises to bear "the matted hair of mourning" and to don, presumably in place of his royal garments, a lion's skin (VIII 90-91; George 2003: 656-57). The hero also endures the physical depredations of the sun and the frost, of pain and of utter exhaustion as he travels the wilderness alone following Enkidu's death (IX 125-127; X 9, 40-52, 112-125, 212-225, 254-261).

f) Hope again, however desperate and unlikely, and fierce determination that Gilgamesh himself will yet evade the fate that has overtaken Enkidu: "'[*I am seeking*] the [*road*] of my forefather, Uta-napišti. / He who stood in the assembly of the gods, and [found life,] / of death and life [*he will tell me the secret*.]'" (IX 75-77; George 2003: 670-71).

g) Refuge – perhaps unsurprising in one possessed of such enormous energies and corporeal capacities – in relentless physical action, ceaseless and near-frenzied motion directed at a very real if futile end. Gilga-

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and one-third human, and as possessing "the flesh of the gods" in his body (IX 49-53, 130; X 7, 268). His abandonment of rule, his entry into the wilderness, his physical mortification and deterioration, and indeed his very quest for immortality, represent a violent dislocation in the divinely established and guarded order of things. Gilgamesh in nearly all the narratives recounting his exploits, and not only in the Standard Babylonian account of his deeds, strives against the gods themselves.

8 Uta-napishti's rebuke of the hero for *being* (performing the role of) a fool is significant here. Gilgamesh was born to be the king, his status marked by his physical perfection and accompanied by various pleasures and privileges as well as responsibilities; he has yet willingly assumed the trappings of a much lower rank, of one who must make do with "inferior food and rough clothing … Gilgameš, in his pitiful condition and ragged attire, looks more like fool than king and, at the same time, is behaving like a fool in pursuing his unattainable goal … because the fool lacks guidance in his affairs, he is not to blame for his predicament; the responsibility for his care lies with the king – who, by contrast, is proverbially well counseled" (George 2003: 504).

mesh's quest for immortality,[9] however quixotic and unlikely, permits the hero to endure the otherwise unendurable (X 63).

In opening the discussion with this dense and deeply evocative account of Enkidu's death and Gilgamesh's response – which comprises, ultimately, only one of many such vividly colored and complex such narrative episodes extant from Mesopotamia – I have hoped to render several points explicit which are explored throughout this volume: (1) that the nascent study of emotion in Mesopotamia specifically, and the ancient Near East more generally, is a fruitful pursuit, with very rich and compelling source material on which to draw; (2) that future study of the visualization or, perhaps better, materialization of emotions must be a multipronged pursuit, examining not only pictorial *and* verbal imagery but also, necessarily, drawing on extensive and thorough analyses of philological / textual and archaeological data (i.e. specific terms and their definitions and contexts of application; textual sources including but by no means limited to the narrative compositions;[10] burial goods and contexts); (3) that the nuances of emotional

[9] Barré (2001) included Gilgamesh, as he is characterized in the SB epic following the death of Enkidu, in his pertinent but somewhat problematic study of "wandering about" as a *topos* of depression (this latter term that would seem to require significant nuancing prior to its application to ancient or non-Western contexts). I am inclined here to be very careful in distinguishing "psychomotor agitation" as a symptom of depression (Barré 2001: 177; see also Kruger 2005) from deliberate motion as a means *coping* with an otherwise overwhelming emotional or other state of being: Gilgamesh's journeying after the death of Enkidu is *not* aimless even if it is futile. Shocked and grievously wounded and afraid the hero might be but his identification and obsessive pursuit of a final hope and singular achievement, the conquest of death, permits him to survive an otherwise unbearable grief. Gilgamesh may perhaps be deranged – if one might strip that term of its pejorative connotations and nuance it as indicating a type of disarray and confusion, a dislocation from the established order of things – but to characterize him as depressed obscures the depth and complexity of his emotional and other state(s) of being. (Gilgamesh's statement to the ferryman Ur-shanabi that, if he cannot cross the ocean to find the flood hero Uta-napishti, he will continue to traverse the wilderness, may seem to support Barré's interpretation of the hero's journey as aimless wandering. But given that Gilgamesh's initial promise to enter the wilderness comes in a series of promises made to the dead Enkidu that the latter shall be fittingly remembered and fittingly mourned (VIII 84-91), this interpretation of Gilgamesh's actions remains an ill-suited one.)

[10] See, for example, the work of Jaques (2006 and in this volume) on Sumerian and Akkadian. See also the call of Chaniotis and Ducrey (2013b: 13) to look for insight into ancient emotions not only in philosophical and dramatic works but also in "literary sources (historiography, medical authors, Greek and Latin poetry and oratory), inscriptions, and the visual arts" and, if possible, archaeological contexts (Tarlow 2000) as well. Oppenheim's (1967: 2) important observation distinguishing scribal production of all sorts in Mesopotamia, particularly with respect to its range of emotional expressiveness, from the types of written productions extant from ancient polities such as Greece is worth addressing here: "Cuneiform texts … were written not by 'authors' but by scribes, members of a class of well trained specialists who were bound by traditional models which permitted little deviation in what was to be written on that piece of clay and in what

states and the complexity of emotional responses, with different emotions frequently entangled or overlapping, often emerge or are materialized in or even *produced* by bodily or physical states and action[11] – a point particularly pertinent for Mesopotamia, in the context of which Cartesian dualism does not apply;[12] and (4) that the emotions expressed or recognized by the ancient inhabitants of Mesopotamia, even if not identical in boundary, experience, or manifestation to our own, are yet accessible and, more importantly, comprehensible to us. (The limitations of such accessibility are discussed further below.)

That the emotions of the peoples of the ancient Near East, as those of other cultures (ancient and modern), diverge from our own is necessarily the case if we accept that emotions are socially and culturally mediated *as well as* biologically influenced.[13] Barring the appearance of significantly more developed and compelling evidence than currently exists, however, I am not inclined to be bogged down by concerns that the humans of the ancient Near East were fundamentally different, biologically or otherwise, from humans of the contemporary world – despite the five thousand plus years separating us from the oldest inhabitants of the first cities. If I have a concern, it is that the traditional boundaries of enquiry, according to which Mesopotamia is grouped with Egypt and the Biblical world, are at once too restrictive and too broad. The nascent study of emotion in Mesopotamia seems one that would benefit significantly from engagement with the nu-

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form this was to be done, under the given circumstances." Greek texts, in contrast, even when about the city or the government, were written by authors who were partisans: "this endows their writings with verve and persuasiveness, with love and hatred, through which not only the personality of the authors but also the conflicts and problems of their world emerge with a directness that touches us even today." This is a legitimate observation – but I would argue that this should not yet preclude the analysis of the extant textual sources for cases where emotional expression, however constrained or programmatic, is evident (i.e. Jaques 2006). It also does not preclude the analysis of the rich narrative sources extant from Mesopotamia, such as those pertaining to Gilgamesh, in which emotional expression (love, desire, grief, anger, fear) is richly described.

11 On the production of emotional states through bodily action and motor mimicry, see the expansive, multidisciplinary, and growing corpus of works including the seminal study of Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson 1994; also Hurley and Chater 2005; von Scheve and Salmela 2014; for a summary of recent literature, see Hatfield et al. 2014. For related issues considered in the context of Mesopotamia, see Delnero, forthcoming. Pertinent to the issue of the *production* of emotional states through bodily responses is the discussion of Ashurbanipal's slain lions in the main text below.

12 On Cartesian dualism and Mesopotamia, see Bahrani 2001: 41ff, 118ff; further Pongratz-Leisten and Sonik 2015: 11 n. 22.

13 I prefer "mediated" to the terms "constructed" or "constituted"; the latter suggest a more rigid sociocultural influence on emotions than I mean to convey here. See Levenson et al. (2007) on most modern theories of emotion falling somewhere between extreme evolutionary (emphasizing biological influences determined through natural selection) and extreme cultural (regarding emotion as primarily culturally influenced, meeting specific cultural beliefs, traditions, and values) construction.

merous theoretically sophisticated scholarly works on the topic pertaining to ancient Greece and Rome, the Middle Ages, and other ancient and more recent Western and non-Western cultures, as well as from engagement with research on Egyptian and Biblical contexts.[14] (The potential benefits and limitations of, as well as the concerns raised by, such broader comparative work are addressed further below. Eurocentrism in particular has often been a persistent and compelling concern but in this context it is neither a singular nor homogenous one: scholars working on emotion in ancient Greece and Rome, for example, have emphasized, as carefully and necessarily as scholars working on Mesopotamia must surely do, the *divergences* between their own contexts and that of the contemporary Western world.) At the same time, however, the delineation of Mesopotamia's *specific* system(s) of emotion must rely exclusively on the extant primary sources from Mesopotamia. If some of the theoretical and methodological approaches applied in other fields of study may inspire important lines of questioning or currents of thought pertinent to our own, specific conclusions drawn with respect to other polities or cultures – regardless of geographical proximity or chronological contemporaneity – cannot be assumed to be applicable to Mesopotamia.

In undertaking the writing of this treatment of emotion, I have considered the topic primarily from the vantage point of an art historian specializing in Mesopotamia. It may surprise the reader, consequently, to find that pictorial imagery is specifically discussed only at the end of this chapter; this has come as something of a surprise to the author as well. As the art historical contributions within this volume have already been summarized in the introductory chapter (Kipfer in this volume) and specifically discussed in the accompanying responses, I have focused my attention upon the future of the field of study. And, upon delving into the substantial corpus of research on emotion in the ancient world, I am persuaded both that significant further insights into emotion and image in Mesopotamia must await further delineation of the Mesopotamian system of emotions[15] *and* that the still-preliminary aspects of this task, which comprise a formi-

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[14] See, for example, the extremely interesting work of Winter (1994, 2000a) on India and Mesopotamia; also Pongratz-Leisten and Sonik (2015) on Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, India, etc.; and the extremely perceptive and thoughtful work of the medievalist Caroline Walker Bynum (2012, 2014) considering sacral materials and materiality in India and Mesopotamia in work on the western Middle Ages. Several of the contributions in this volume (i.e. Jaques; Cornelius) have also drawn on or referenced studies of emotion pertaining to other (particularly ancient and non-Western) contexts.

[15] This might be compared to the (related) task of defining the sensorium or system of the senses of Mesopotamia and other ancient polities (i.e. McMahon 2013; Fleming 2015; Rendu Loisel 2015), an endeavor proceeding within the larger framework of a flourishing interest in and analysis of the senses in historical, archaeological, religious, and other contexts (i.e. Houston and Taube 2000; Houston, Stuart, and Taube 2006: 134-79; Bennet 2001; Smith 2007; Day 2013; Hamilakis 2014; Promey 2014).

dable undertakings in their own right, must continue for the moment to occur primarily within the province of the extant texts (see caveats expressed at the end of this chapter).[16] As a scholar with a longstanding interest in Mesopotamia's strikingly rich and affecting narratives and narrative imagery, I admit to finding the prospect of this vast endeavor a very exciting one. Given these considerations, my discussion below is directed primarily at addressing key terminological, theoretical, and methodological issues with respect to the future study of emotion in Mesopotamia across the full available spectrum of sources (textual, pictorial, and archaeological), and at identifying specific research directions that may yield new insights and open up productive new modes of analysis.

## *2. Emotion in Cross-Cultural Perspective: Terminology and Methodology*

### *2.1. Between biology and culture: defining "emotion" for the ancient world*

The necessarily brief and limited explication of the passage from the SB *Gilgamesh Epic* opening this chapter[17] deliberately omits any attempt to distinguish between such categories or conceptualizations as emotion or feeling, mood or sensation, affect or proto-emotion or even basic emotion.[18]

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[16] Kramer (1958, 1988) already emphasized an interest in Sumerian literature's "abiding concern with the personality and character of the people who created any given culture, their psychological attitudes and *emotional* responses, *the drives and motives that trigger and inspire their conduct and behavior* [italics mine]" (Kramer 1988: 205). While Kramer's (1958, 1988: 205-209) preliminary discussion of love, fear, and hate requires further and significant nuancing (and, in some cases, challenging) – he emphasized the status of his own work as "only an initial and pioneer attempt to isolate and describe some of the psychological traits of Sumerian behavior to be corrected, modified and expanded as the source material grows" (1958: 66 n.1) – it underscores the fact that the recognition of Mesopotamia's extant textual corpus as a rich resource for pursuing such topics is by no means a new one. See also Black (1998: 55, 89, 106, 117, 165, 168) with respect to Sumerian poetry; Foster (2011: 122-24) with respect to Akkadian and other textual sources; Larsen (2001) with respect to the Old Assyrian letters; Jaques (2006 and in this volume) with respect to philological tools and methods for approaching emotion in Sumerian texts especially.

[17] This opening explication also deliberately maps English terminology onto a foreign – and yet, I would emphatically argue, neither utterly alien nor unknowable – context; the grounding of the analysis of emotions in this episode within a culturally specific understanding of Mesopotamia's system(s) of emotions, perhaps refined further by time period, unfortunately awaits the publication of research and large-scale studies well beyond the scope of this chapter (see further main text below).

[18] I have particularly hesitated to discuss issues pertaining to affect here despite their relevance to the current topic (on emotion and affect see esp. Leys 2011a, 2011b, 2012; Connolly 2011) and the significance of the so-called "affective turn" in the humanities

While a nuanced definition of what constitutes an emotion as opposed to, for example, an affect[19] in Mesopotamia has the potential to be productively developed, the fine terminological distinctions that have been or are being attempted by psychologists, most still hotly contested,[20] cannot in any practical or useful way be applied to the ancient contexts under study here – it is not yet clear, indeed, that they can be productively or even consistently applied to *any* context.

More immediately pertinent, I would suggest, are such approaches, though not themselves monolithic, as have already been adopted by the growing number of scholars pursuing the study of emotion in other cultural contexts, heavily clustered to date in the fields of study of ancient Greece and Rome. These have typically refrained from very extensive or explicit definitions of emotion in favor of focusing on specific emotion terms themselves, and on delineating the "nature and significance of the many divergences in sense, reference, extension, and connotation between the names of [for example] the ancient Greek *pathê* and their nearest equivalents in the lexicon of English emotion terms. Detailed research of this kind is an *essential prerequisite* [italics mine] for any account of ancient emotion" (Cairns 2008: 51).[21] While this type of detailed research, which must be pursued across the full range of available source materials, is not yet so

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and social sciences (i.e. Massumi 1995, 2002, 2015; Bennett 2005; Clough 2007; Van Alphen 2008; Gregg and Seigworth 2010; Leys 2011a). Even a brief treatment of such issues in reference to Mesopotamia's artworks would expand this chapter far beyond its proper bounds and would be far better undertaken in an independent and preferably book-length study or edited volume. It is at least worth noting, however, O'Sullivan's (2001: 125) relatively clearly articulated definition of affect as the "momen[t] of *intensity*, a reaction in/on the body at the level of matter … the effect another body, for example an art object, has upon [one's] own body and [one's] body's *duration*," and, with specific respect to Mesopotamia, Winter's (1998, 2007) important contributions on the affective properties of style and the affective object.

19 See, for example, Konstan's (2015) distinction between what he terms affects, "certain instinctive responses" common to human beings (and some other animals), and what he recognizes as emotions (the Greek *pathê*), which he characterizes as socially constructed or "conditioned in significant ways by culture." On basic emotions, see also Levenson 2011.

20 Some of the major issues and ongoing debates are summarized in Wagner-Durand in this volume.

21 For a critique of some of the shortcomings of this necessary, if also necessarily problematic, initial approach to ancient emotion, see Cairns 2008: 51ff. Cairns' critique, notably, is specifically in reference to the seminal works of David Konstan (2001, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2015) on Greek emotions, though the study of emotions in Greek and Roman contexts has seen burgeoning interest over the past decade or so; i.e. Braund and Most 2004; Cairns and Nelis 2016; Caston 2012; Chaniotis 2012; Chaniotis and Ducrey 2013; Fulkerson 2013; Goldie 2010; Graver 2007; Kalimtzis 2012; Kaster 2005; Konstan 2006; Masséglia 2015; Sternberg 2005; Sanders 2014; and Sanders et al. 2012, to cite just a few of the larger-scale studies. Some significant earlier studies include Padel 1992; Stewart 1997; Harris 2001; Konstan 2001; Fortenbaugh 2002. See also the important works on emotion in the Middle Ages, including Rosenwein 1998, 2006, 2016.

broadly available for Mesopotamia as it is for the Classical world, a very important beginning has already been made on its production (i.e. Kramer 1958, 1988; Jaques 2006; Foster 2011; Durand, Marti, and Römer 2016; Delnero, forthcoming; and this volume).

The one suggestion that I would make here with specific respect to how emotions in Mesopotamia will ultimately be defined and understood is that there must be a significant emphasis on embodiment and action: in a cultural context in which Cartesian dualism did not hold sway, emotion might well be regarded as a state of *being*.[22] (Given the biological and physiological aspects of emotion, this point is likely much more generally applicable.) The pursuit of the materialization of emotion, and by this I refer to the range of bodily or physiological expressions, responses, and actions associated or performed in accordance with or in response to a specific emotional state (whether spontaneous or prescribed), is vital to – and, I would argue, also inextricably intertwined with – any more specific consideration of emotion in the visual and other arts of Mesopotamia.[23]

### *2.2. Methodology and source material: studying emotions across cultures*

As a starting point, then, it is useful to assume the comparative study of emotions may be legitimately based in "broad similarities in the range and nature of emotions across cultures" (Konstan 2005: 225),[24] a basis that provides some justification for the use of the term emotion to encompass such phenomena as love, hate, and anger in other cultural contexts, even those that lack comparable terms or classifications.[25] Simultaneously, however, it

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[22] A state of being (mind-body) is here suggested rather than a state of mind *or* body. This phrasing is also meant to encompass the potential performative aspects of emotion. See fn. 12 above; also see Sonik 2012a on issues pertaining to embodied identity, metamorphosis, and the boundaries of being in Mesopotamia.

[23] The brief discussion of emotions and inner feeling in Foster (2011: 122-24) emphasizes such physical responses. In discussing Akkadian word choices with respect to "happiness," for example, Foster (2011: 122) notes (1) *hadû*, centering on the "gratification of a want or a need met, a mood or disposition, a personal triumph or gain, as well as pleasure at the misfortune of an adversary"; (2) *ri'āšum*, more akin "to joy, at escaping a threat, or experiencing a thrill, at seeing something especially moving, or feeling a tingle of elaboration"; (3) *elēṣu*, "more physical, an experience that caused the body or spirit to swell and glow with pleasure." See also the association drawn between formulations of feelings and manifestations of light: "The face of one who is angry is 'dark' … one who is satisfied 'radiates'" (Charpin 2013: 65).

[24] This approach assumes, as discussed above, that differences in emotions across cultures are grounded not in biological differences of the peoples involved, ancient or modern, but in divergent social and cultural mediations (I would encompass linguistic considerations under these larger categories); see further on this, for example, Konstan 2005, 2006, 2015.

[25] In his famous study on restraining rage in the Greco-Roman world, Harris (2001) pragmatically referred not only to anger but also to "anger-like" emotions so as not to prema-

must be acknowledged that the boundaries, expressions, perceptions and receptions of, as well as (and perhaps especially) the stimuli evoking, specific emotions are likely to be the sites of very significant cultural variation (Konstan 2005: 227; Harris 2001: 24-25). Such variations, indeed, "may be systematic, in the sense that, taken together, both the inventory of basic emotion terms in a culture, and the specific character of the emotions included, may reveal a coherent structure of feeling that differs in determinate ways from that of other cultures" (Konstan 2005: 225). The holistic system that emerges "may be seen to bear a relationship to values and beliefs within the culture at large, which is in turn distinctive in respect to other societies" (Konstan 2005: 225).

I want to underscore here the import of *both* the broad similarities in emotions across cultures – presumably grounded in common human biology and physiology – *and* the culturally specific variations in their character and expression by considering an example presented by Konstan (2015, also 2006: ch. 10). He briefly but thoughtfully discusses, with specific respect to physical pain and pity, the assertion of Timpanaro (1975 [1970]: 52; apud Eagleton 2003: xiii) that "man as a biological being has remained essentially unchanged from the beginnings of civilization to the present; and those sentiments and representations which are closest to the biological facts of human existence [i.e. pain] have changed little." Timpanaro's position was championed by Eagleton (2003: xiv) in the latter's important volume on violence: using as exemplar the Greek hero Philoctetes (Fig. 1), famously ravaged by pain from a perpetually festering foot wound, Eagleton memorably asserted that the question of why we (as a modern audience) feel sympathy for Philoctetes "is a pseudo-problem bred by a bogus historicism."[26] Konstan's response (2015 n. 8) to Timpanaro and Eagleton is worth considering, and is broadly applicable to larger issues pertaining to the study of ancient emotion(s). While accepting pain as a universal human

turely or imprecisely curtail the subject of his study: multiple terms, he noted, some more or less synonymous and others with quite specific connotations, might be deployed in reference to a larger emotional phenomenon that had elements in common with and yet was not identical to anger as we might understand it in a contemporary western context. On the subject of comparative study across cultures, Bynum's (2014) paper provides something of a touchstone: with respect to the cross-cultural study of emotions, however, I am inclined to recognize continuities significant enough (in most cases) that concerns about pseudomorphism and related errors seem unwarranted. See further, however, the main text below.

[26] Eagleton (2003: xiv) continues, persuasively insofar as his argument goes, that "we feel sympathy for Philoctetes because he is in agonizing pain from his pus-swollen foot. There is no use pretending that his foot is a realm of impenetrable otherness which our modern-day notions can only grasp at the cost of brutally colonizing the past. There is nothing hermeneutically opaque about Philoctetes' hobbling and bellowing." See further on cross-cultural studies of pain specifically and its representation, Rey 1998; Cohen 2000; Moscoso 2012. See also the discussion of Fuller's (1983) position in the main text below.

phenomenon with which humans generally, modern as well as ancient, might sympathize,[27] Konstan recognizes it also, in how it is perceived, understood, and even experienced, as a culturally mediated one: "Philoctetes' description of his suffering reflects Greek notions of the self and of bodily sensations insofar as pain is described as an outside agent attacking the body … As a consequence of the interplay of nature and culture, Sophocles' experience and conception of pain [as expressed in his *Philoctetes*] are different from mine" (Budelmann 2010: 112; apud Konstan 2015 n. 8).[28]

And yet, if Konstan's point is well taken, so, too, is that of Eagleton: in our search for nuance and cultural (and individual) specificity, we ought not lose sight of the broader commonalities in human experience and physiology that permit, among other things, the general *translatability* of many of our arts. I am put in mind here of an anecdote recounted by Fuller (1983: 2-3) with respect to the Laocoön (Fig. 2),[29] regarding which he demanded of a post-structuralist art historian, "Well then, how do we know the Laocoon is in pain," and received the answer, "We know the Laocoon is in pain because we have studied the modes of production prevailing in Greece at the time it was made, and the signifying practices to which it gave rise." Fuller's challenge as he recounts it, "But Griselda, he's being strangled by a sea monster," was met with the wholly serious response, "Yes … but we have no means of knowing whether or not he's enjoying it." This episode was cited by Fuller as the impetus for his turn *toward* approaches and applications from science, and the consideration of precisely such biological and physiological commonalities among human beings across civilizations and cultures, in the study of art. This scholarly turn has, notably, since flourished and yielded numerous interesting and important, if also prob-

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[27] In the interests of recognizing the extraordinary range of individually, in addition to culturally, shaped experience it should be noted that there are also individuals who do not feel physical pain (as, for example, due to congenital analgesia or nerve damage).

[28] It is worth attending to Budelmann's (2010) larger discussion of this topic as it offers a nuanced view of both the divergences and commonalities of pain as presented by Sophocles and pain as understood by the modern audience of Sophocles' play. Perhaps even more pertinent, however, is Budelmann's recognition (2010: 112) of *translatability* as a crucial point in his analysis: "As a consequence of the interplay between nature and culture, Sophocles' experiences and conception of pain are different from mine … but at the same time eminently translatable." One might recognize translatability also as a key feature of the experiences of Gilgamesh in the opening passages of this chapter. And yet, the translatability of the experience and conception of physical pain – and for that matter, of various emotions – does not excuse us from the task of both recognizing and elucidating the *specific* ways in which our own experiences (on a larger cultural or even more specific individual level) diverge from those of others. Explorations of larger issues of translatability, empathy, and commonalities of human experience from an archaeological perspective appear in Tarlow 2000.

[29] Fuller (1983: 3-4), as Eagleton, was significantly influenced by the thinking of Timpanaro, and by the latter's suggestion that much of art touches on the *fundamentals* of human experience: "birth, infancy, love, sexual reproduction, ageing, death, and our sense of smallness given the limitless of the cosmos."

lematic and controversial, approaches to images and artworks, including those developing out of the still-nascent fields of neuroaesthetics and neuroarthistory. (These fields are discussed at the end of this chapter in brief but are certainly worthy of consideration at much greater length.)

Konstan's and Fuller's sharp elucidations, from either side of the problem of engaging with the (art)works of other cultures, underscore the need to chart a middle course between, to put it somewhat tritely, culture and nature. To suggest that the works of other cultures are fundamentally inaccessible to us from an emotional or other vantage point is surely a fallacy; our capacity to appreciate and be affected by these works is grounded in our common humanity and human experience. But equally fallacious, in the study of art or any other human endeavor, is the failure to recognize or account for the significant socio-cultural *mediation* of human experience.[30] Within the discipline of art history, Michael Baxandall's (1988; first ed. 1972) sophisticated conceptualization of the Period Eye stands out as a model of the type of sensitive and multifaceted analysis that may be yielded by the recognition of common human physiology on the one hand and of sociocultural (collective) and specific individual experience on the other.[31]

In pursuing the future study of emotion in the ancient Near East, then, our task as scholars lacking access to first-hand interactions and observations would thus seem *first* to be the delineation of the larger system of emotions as it is manifested in the material remains (texts, images, artifacts and their contexts) of the specific civilization under study, and of what it was that the inhabitants of Mesopotamia – or of any of the various other regions comprising the ancient Near East – meant by the various terms they used for emotional phenomena such as love, fear, and anger.[32] Our task in

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[30] On an even more specific level, there are surely individual as well as cultural divergences in the experience and perception of emotion, as well as other phenomena, a point already well taken by scholars working on the ancient world and its arts; see, for example, Budelmann 2010: 112 (specifically on emotion); fn. 28 above. The psychologist Robert Solso (1994: 102), discussing encounters with artworks specifically, observed that "basic perception is fixed by physiological structures that are jointly enjoyed by all members of the species … [but b]oth individual psychology [including larger cultural experience and knowledge] and common physiology contribute to the perception of art." See also, with specific respect to Mesopotamia, the discussion in Pongratz-Leisten and Sonik 2015: 52ff.

[31] Baxandall's (1988; first ed. 1972) study is not without its own issues, and some of the criticisms lodged against it remain potent ones; for a useful summary of the Period Eye's reception and critique, see Langdale 1998. And yet, it remains an extraordinarily powerful demonstration of the need to elucidate the sociocultural mediation of even seemingly universal human capacities and experiences (specifically with respect to *ways of seeing*). The failure to recognize or address this type of mediation has, most recently, constituted a near-fatal flaw in scholarship arising out of the developing fields of neuroaesthetics and neuroarthistory; it is particularly evident in some of the foundational studies (i.e. Ramachandran and Hirstein 1999; Zeki 1999).

[32] I do not by any means wish to suggest that the boundaries of Sumerian or Akkadian terms for or experiences of such emotions will correspond to those of our own, or even

this regard differs from that of Classical scholars in that we lack the types of *explicit* discourse on emotions extant for Greece and Rome that has been supplied primarily by philosophers and intellectuals such as Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Seneca, and Galen. (We do possess, however, and I cannot overemphasize the significance of this, a very rich literary corpus from Mesopotamia, as well as numerous other texts within which a striking array of emotions is expressed and encountered; these are ripe for such meticulous and compelling investigations as have been undertaken into, for example, the Greek epics and tragedies, as well as, more recently, into inscriptions and diverse other textual sources.[33]) Our task differs from that of Classical scholars also, or so I would argue, in that it is incumbent on us to open up sites of understanding in addition to focusing on divergences. Classical scholars must contend with the assumption, an incorrect one, that the emotional systems of the ancient Greeks and Romans were contiguous with or even identical to that of the contemporary Western world (Konstan 2006: 5),[34] which itself can hardly be conceived in homogenous or monolithic terms. Near Eastern scholars must contend with underlying assumptions or fears, equally false, that we, the contemporary Western we, may have little or nothing in common with the peoples and cultures of the ancient Near East.

If we possess different types of sources and confront different assumptions than scholars of the Classical world, then, we are yet well supplied with a very diverse array of written compositions, as well as other types of pictorial and archaeological evidence, that have the potential to offer significant and nuanced insights into the conceptualization and materialization

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that the same range of emotions will be present. But until these boundaries have been thoroughly defined (i.e. Kramer 1958, 1988; Jaques 2006; Foster 2011), we are limited to applying our own terms with their contemporary boundaries intact.

33 See, however, the objections of Oppenheim (1967) in fn. 10 above.

34 Konstan (2006: 5) acknowledges that it might seem somewhat peculiar to query whether the ancient Greeks possessed the same emotions as we do: "We respond profoundly to their epic and tragic poetry, laugh at their comedies, are moved by their love lyrics, and look to their philosophy as a model for our own. How could this be the case if their emotional repertoire was in some important respect different from ours? Besides, emotions such as love, fear, and anger are surely basic human capacities, and their manifestations must be similar everywhere, whether in antiquity or today." And yet, as he demonstrates, emotional categories from Greek contexts (as from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*) repeatedly cut across, collapse, disappear from, or have no equivalent in our own categories. One is ultimately able to delineate and understand such differences "only through a close examination of emotional *language* [italics mine] in cultures foreign to one's own" (Konstan 2006: 16). With respect to now-dead foreign cultures, Mesopotamia as well as Greece, I would again underscore the need for an *initial* model of a system of emotions constructed through a meticulous, sensitive, and multifaceted consideration of the extant *written* sources directly or indirectly addressing pertinent topics (see further, however, my caveats on the implications for the pictorial sources and their analysis with respect to emotion in the main text below).

of emotions in the Near East. What we are lacking, for the moment, is a density of:

1) Large-scale, meticulously thorough, and multifaceted explorations of specific emotions across a range of extant contexts (written, pictorial, archaeological) that have provided the necessary foundations for the study of emotion in other fields of study. These include for the Classical world, as just a small sampling, studies of honor and shame (Cairns 1993); anger-like emotions and their restraint (Braund and Most: 2004; Harris 2001; Konstan 2008); remorse (Fulkerson 2013); pity (Sternberg 2005); and envy and jealousy (Konstan and Rutter 2003; Caston 2012; Sanders 2014). Initial studies with respect to Mesopotamia include the preliminary and relatively brief but foundational treatments of Kramer (1958, 1988) and the extensive philological approaches to and analyses of emotion in Sumerian sources especially that have been outlined by Jaques (2006 and in this volume).
2) Smaller and more intensive studies examining the deployment of particular emotions in narrower and more delimited corpora of written compositions (i.e. the contributions in Chaniotis 2012a; Chaniotis and Ducrey 2013a; also Chaniotis 2012b, 2013). Some pertinent studies for Mesopotamia, albeit often dealing with emotion and feeling obliquely or peripherally in the course of pursuing other topics, should be noted here as they will form necessary foundations for future work on emotion. On fear, for example, see Geller 1999: 49-55, Stol 1999: 61-65; on grief, see Cohen 2005: 15-24, 48-50, Delnero, forthcoming, Jacobsen 1980, Jacques 2012, Valk 2016; on love, see Harris 2000: passim, Nissinen 2001, Westenholz 1995; and on anger, see Durand, Marti, and Römer 2016, Fox 1995, Hirsch 1967. Important translations of primary source material vital to future researches also exist (i.e. Sefati 1998 [love poetry]; Cohen 1988 [grief and lamentation]; Oshima 2014 [suffering, associated with various emotional states]); George 2003 and Foster 2005 [epic poetry]).
3) Opportunities to examine the substantial corpus of pictorial and archaeological data potentially relevant to refining a Mesopotamian system of emotions alongside a fully fleshed model of such a system constructed through analysis of the texts. (Such opportunities, however, will surely become available in light of the below.)

With an existing foundation of expansive published primary source material that is ripe for explicit and systematic analysis, of a number of studies at least obliquely touching on emotions and emotional expression, and of a range of new publications directly addressing one or more specific emotion in Mesopotamia – including the current volume, the recent edited volume of Durand, Marti, and Römer (2016) on divine anger and repentance, and a forthcoming study by Delnero on the Sumerian laments and emotional con-

tagion – however, the development of emotion as a subject of critical interest for Mesopotamia, and for Near Eastern studies more generally, is clearly underway.

## *3. Future Research Directions*

The contributions contained within this volume on visualizing emotion in the ancient Near East have provided a significant service in assessing the contemporary state of the field, and in exploiting our current knowledge of both emotions and images in the Near East. I would suggest, as the field gains ground, several directions for future research that are likely to prove productive.

### *3.1. Comparative research*

While recognizing that individual cultures operate on the basis of distinct systems of emotions, necessarily so if we accept that emotions are socially and culturally mediated, it would seem incumbent on future researchers to examine the ways in which scholars have grappled with the delineation and conceptualization of emotions in other cultures. There is an extensive, multifaceted, and rapidly expanding corpus of scholarship on emotion in contemporary foreign contexts (i.e. Desjarlais 1992; Lynch 1990; Gregg 2005: 90-133; Marks 1995; Matsumoto 1996; Sundararajan 2015)[35] as well as in ancient ones (see above). The latter corpus, importantly, encompasses a dense, diverse, and expanding number of works on pictorial representations of emotion and on body language, gesture, and nonverbal communication in both image and text (i.e. Aldrete 1999; Bodiou et al. 2006; Brilliant 1963; Bremmer and Roodenburg 1991; Cairns 2005; Graf 1991; Gruber 1980; Masséglia 2013, 2015; McNiven 2000; Oakley 2005; O'Sullivan 2011).[36] The pictorial studies among this group, if underpinned by foundations constructed by thorough and meticulous text-based research expliating their pertinent cultural contexts, are neither constricted by nor subervient to these foundations.

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[35] Worth looking to also, and highlighting the developing significance of emotion as a multifaceted field of enquiry with diverse implications, are Reddy (2001), Plamper (2015 [2012]), Röttger-Rössler and Markowitsch (2009), Corrigan's (2004, 2008) volumes on emotion and religion, and numerous specialized studies including Miller (1998) on disgust and Moscoso (2012) on pain.

[36] With specific respect to the ancient Near East, a number of smaller scale and more specific studies on gesture and body language have been published in addition to Gruber's (1980) rather monumental cross-cultural study on non-verbal communication: on Mesopotamia (especially Assyria) see also, for example, Magen 1986; Goldman 1990; Fox 1995; Cifarelli 1998; Bonatz 2002 and in this volume.

This type of comparative work offers, for one, insight into the numerous theoretical, methodological, and other obstacles that have already been encountered, deliberately or unthinkingly ignored, or successfully navigated in the attempt to delineate emotions – and their materializations – in other foreign cultural contexts. It also has the potential to suggest larger research directions and issues that have not yet been identified in the context of our own field of study (i.e. Chaniotis and Ducrey 2013b: 11ff.). And, most vitally, if also least directly, it functions as an important mechanism of cognitive dilation, enabling a significantly expanded recognition of the enormous array of possibilities and ways of viewing, constructing, and experiencing the world: as such, it may facilitate the type of Peleus-like dexterity, albeit here cognitive rather than physical, necessary to grapple with so protean and Thetis-like a problem as elucidating emotion in a foreign and dead cultural context.

All this is *not*, by any means, to suggest that Near Eastern scholars may find in such comparative researches specific answers or precise approaches or methodologies that may be mapped, unmediated, onto their own fields or contexts of study. But it is to reiterate that the value we acknowledge in looking beyond Mesopotamia to, for example, Egypt and the Biblical world (and while these may possess many things in common with Mesopotamia, they are also characterized by significant major and minor divergences) might be – particularly for a subject such as emotion, for which a dense corpus of research exists with respect to other regions, ancient and modern – rather more broadly recognized.

### *3.2. Delineation of a system of emotion(s) in socio-cultural context*

In looking ahead to the further development of research on emotion in the ancient Near East, a primary impediment, if by no means an insurmountable one, with respect to analyzing pictorial as well as written sources is the ongoing dearth of *large-scale*, nuanced, and numerous studies of *specific* emotions across a very broad range of extant contexts (though see various of the sections in Jaques 2006, and the chapters by Charpin, Marti, Ziegler, Cohen, Anthonioz, and Durand in Durand, Marti, and Römer 2016) that would permit the modeling of a *comprehensive* system of emotion in Mesopotamia.[37]

The contributions in the present volume have explored both the sorts of broad cross-cultural similarities in emotion that permit scholars to productively study the phenomenon in foreign contexts *and* the sorts of socially and culturally specific divergences that continue to render this endeavor

[37] A start on this enormous task has been made; for some of the initial studies with respect to Mesopotamia, see fns. 16, 23 above.

such a slippery, challenging, and interesting field of study. As a necessary next step, then, in seeking to identify and understand in more nuanced and consistent ways than are currently possible, specific pictorial and verbal expressions of fear, anger, joy, grief, etc., it is incumbent on us to identify the boundaries of individual emotions in the polities or cultures under consideration and to develop, insofar as possible from the extant sources, an understanding of the larger system of emotion at work in any one region – in some cases perhaps even limited further by time period – of the ancient Near East. Significant further insights into more narrowly constructed and defined pictorial considerations, as into the role of the specific social status, gender, age, and situational or display context of a particular figural representation or image on the expression or communication of emotion, also await the construction of such a system(s).[38] In the furthering of this particular pursuit, it would seem extremely important *not* to elide the boundaries between the various polities of the ancient Near East (as, for example, those between Mesopotamia and Egypt or Mesopotamia and the various polities of the Levant), or to *begin* from the assumption that geographical contiguity is associated with any very significant continuity in system of emotion.

It may seem that the burden of this type of research falls most heavily on philologists and text-based scholars. And indeed – at least for the moment – this is the case. The contributions in this volume, in assessing and exploiting to the extent possible our *current* capabilities with respect to emotion and images across a range of Near Eastern contexts, have underscored the need, as a requisite next step, to construct thoroughly detailed, multifaceted, and meticulously explored models of the *specific* systems of emotions operative within the polities or cultures under study. Until such models have been constructed, we are by necessity constrained to discussing emotion in the most general terms and, moreover, to bluntly seeking our own conceptualization of emotion(s) within foreign contexts without accounting for significant and culturally specific divergences. (The literary case study from the SB *Gilgamesh Epic* that opens this chapter is precisely such a blunt approach, even if it is included primarily to highlight both the need, and the availability of rich source material, for more specific and nuanced approaches.)

All this is absolutely *not* a call to privilege the textual sources over the pictorial ones, nor an assertion that the written sources will explain the visual ones, nor even a suggestion that pictorial sources do not and will not supply significant additional dimensions to our understanding of emotion in Mesopotamia beyond those already outlined in this volume. In this regard, the development of Classical scholarship on emotion is worth raising again here: the analysis of images and objects may be underpinned by and often

[38] See, for example, the recent studies of Masséglia 2013, 2015 on the Greek world.

proceeds alongside or in cooperation with the results of textual research but it is neither subordinate to nor constrained or directed by the latter.

### *3.3. Emotion and the ancient Arts: where we go from here*

With specific respect to future work on images/objects/artworks and emotions, two primary avenues of research present themselves and are discussed in brief below: (1) the emotional "content" of artworks; (2) the emotions evoked by artworks. (A third clear and interrelated avenue of research, albeit one beyond the specific purview of this chapter, pertains to the affective operations of artworks, literary and pictorial, with respect to the ancient and to a modern audience.[39]) While distinguished here to facilitate the illumination of certain specific issues pertaining to each, these avenues of research are in many respects intertwined so that examination of any one will serve also to some degree to elucidate the others.

#### *3.3.1. Emotional content*

With respect to analyzing and identifying the emotional content of specific pictorial compositions, the emotions with which specific scenes or figures were imbued and/or the emotions these were designed to convey to the viewer, art historians have long recognized the need to look beyond the face. This is true not only for Mesopotamian art (i.e. Bonatz in this volume) but also, importantly, for other more familiar forms of Western as well as non-Western art.

On a particularly dark and dreary December afternoon in Berlin this past winter, I found myself at the Bode Museum for the first time in many years and spent several hours wandering through the galleries. I had been deep in thought that day about the nature and effects of emotions and the success and failure of their control, and was at once disconcerted, compelled, and repulsed as I walked through the collections and encountered expressionless face after expressionless face, even on figures otherwise physically or emotionally stricken – even in scenes otherwise depicting horrors (Figs. 3-4). This phenomenon, characteristic of much earlier and even some later arts of the Middle Ages, was intriguingly taken up by Sauerländer (2006: 4), who noted that facial expression had moral dimensions in medieval philosophy and theology:

> The passionate physiognomy was regarded simply as sinful, and in the realm of sin there can be no order. According to the eighth-century Anglo-Saxon scholar Alcuin, 'The face should be orderly, the lips should not be

[39] See further on this fns. 18, 19 above.

> distorted, no immeasured opening should extend the mouth, nor should the eyebrows be raised or cast down.' Nearly four hundred years later, the theologian Hugh of Saint Victor (1096-1141) wrote, 'The face is the mirror of discipline which must be guarded the more because what appears as the sign of sin on the face cannot be concealed.'[40]

It is perhaps worth considering this phenomenon of expressionless or serene faces in earlier medieval art in juxtaposition with what Sauerländer (2006: 9-10) refers to as the "Gothic grin," appearing by about 1250 CE, first on the faces of the blessed in medieval art but soon thereafter also on a range of other types of faces. The signification of this "grin" remains somewhat complex: it might signal the happiness of the blessed but is also used, for example, to signify female gentility (Sauerländer 2006: 10). Facial expression, whether present or absent, is by no means easily correlated with any particular state of mind or body but may also be intimately tied into social status or position, or function as another type of social, political, or cultural marker.

With specific respect to Mesopotamia, it is certainly worth exploring further, then, the socially and culturally specific contexts within and reasons for the relative expressionlessness of various types of faces, as well as considering technical and other factors (these do not seem to be deeply rooted in any artisanal incapacity)[41] limiting the representation or visualization of specific expressions:

(1) Mesopotamia's extant artworks were intended to *act* in numerous and multifaceted ways *in* and *on* the world: much of the pictorial corpus, more specifically, belongs to the category of *Machtkunst* (official art), designed to serve the ideological and other ends of the polity and ruling author-

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[40] Little (2006: xv) noted that the majority of the heads appearing in the 2006-2007 Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition "Set in Stone," to which Sauerländer's essay was an accompaniment, were similarly expressionless as they belonged primarily to holy figures or to the personifications of religious concepts, and so might be regarded as "visual representations of a serene state or transcendent happiness." It is not only holy figures that may be represented with this peculiar expressionlessness: a study by Ambrose (2011: 4) elucidates the dearth of facial or even bodily expression of the damned on the early twelfth century Conques Tympanum as based in a conceptualization of "eternal suffering in terms of a profound loss of bodily control." More intriguingly, he explores medieval understandings of pain and suffering as *impressive* rather than *expressive*: "the body serves primarily as a vehicle to transmit pain to the soul." See also, on other approaches to the medieval face and emotional expression or lack thereof, Little and Maines 2007; Brilliant 2007; Dale 2007; Gertsman 2010. On the emotional complexity of the Pietà, and the range of meanings potentially communicated by Mary's facial expression (or lack thereof) and gestures in the various extant pictorial representations of the subject, see see Forsyth 1953; Eriksson 2016.

[41] Leys (2010) offers useful insight into the difficulties involved in capturing facial expressions conveying very specific emotions, even in photographs, and into unresolved questions on the universality of such facial expressions in her compelling study on fear as a scientific object.

ity.[42] We should understand this category of art object as rigorously controlled and carefully formulated. This did not preclude its innovation, or the development of striking visual forms of significant interest to the viewer, but it ensured (in great part) that the emotional and other content of official images was very specifically prescribed in service to particular ends.[43]

(2) Individual figures depicted in two-dimensional (official) pictorial representation are almost exclusively depicted in profile. Certain types of figures may occasionally be depicted frontally, as specific goddesses from the third millennium BCE (Asher-Greve 2003) and monsters (Sonik 2013c), a mode of representation that may have altered the nature of their interaction with or effects upon the viewer but that does not typically seem to have been exploited to communicate any great nuance in the specific emotional states of the individual figures so represented. It is worth considering an image such as that of Nergal slaying the (*en face*) Cyclops (George 2012), in which the physical pain of the Cyclops is communicated not by its facial expression but by the bowing of its body, a sort of hunching over its belly as Nergal's sword penetrates its midsection (Fig. 5).

(3) Narrative pictorial compositions, offering frameworks within which emotional content might be elaborated and conveyed to, as well as fully understood by, the viewer are relatively rare in Mesopotamia's visual arts until the complex historical and battle relief narratives of the early to mid-first millennium BCE Neo-Assyrian palaces (Winter 1981, 1985; Sonik 2014). Those narrative compositions that do survive to the present day typically belong to the category of official art: figures are typically rendered in profile, and gesture seems to have been developed as the primary means of expressing and perhaps also evoking any emotion (i.e. Fox 1995; Cifarelli 1998; Bonatz 2002).

(4) Many of the extant examples of *popular* visual art, or of images straddling the line between official and popular or domestic (Sonik 2014) – within which expressions of emotional and other personal states of being might be (and are) more varied – are miniature or quite small in scale and so do not permit the effective exploitation of the face as a site or medium of expression.

(5) Even the extant popular arts, moreover, do not escape a significant degree of deliberate and strictured formulation. This is not a criticism; the pictorial formulas employed and deliberately deployed in the arts of Mesopotamia preclude neither significant variation in nor the encapsulation and communication of an impressive density and array of meanings (Sonik

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[42] That much of Mesopotamia's official art functions to ideological (Ross 2005) or religious (Ornan 2005: 8-9) ends does not preclude its possession of other significant aspects or roles (aesthetic, religious, etc.); see Winter 1995, 2002; Sonik 2014.

[43] See the useful studies on emotional expression and restraint in the context of Mayan art: Marcus 1974; Miller 1983; Houston 2001; Houston, Stuart, and Taube 2006: 180-201; also fn. 6 above.

2014, 2015).[44] The formulation referenced is due in part to the modes of production employed for the popular arts, which include (for the terracotta plaques and some of the figurines) mass replication through the use of molds.

All of the above is not to say that faces hold no interest for us at all. Some faces, as have been variously discussed in this volume, appear to be more benign than serene or expressionless – though I would not, without significantly more support than is available, interpret these as conveying any specific emotional states. One might look to the phenomenon of the "Archaic smile" characteristic of Greek sculpture during the eponymous Archaic Period (ca. 700-480 BCE) for an example of a widely deployed seemingly benign facial expression that is not yet associated with any very specific emotion (Fig. 6).[45] Instead, I would suggest we might find it productive to explore the juxtaposition of faces and bodies, with specific respect on the one hand to those faces and bodies belonging to figures constitutive of Self (the gods, the king, his soldiers, and his people) and on the other to the faces and bodies belonging to figures constitutive of the Other (various monstrous figures, wild animals, and human enemies). This is only an initial model to consider, and certainly one pointed to by my own researches (Sonik 2013b), but it is one that yields immediate if still limited results. In various combat scenes, for example, one might note that the serene faces of figures belonging to the category of Self (mouths are closed, facial musculature is smooth and unruffled) are combined with bodies in action and yet neither straining nor disordered: musculature is defined and, often, impressive but never overtaxed or even exerted to the point of bending or bowing the body. The faces and bodies of Others, particularly monstrous Others, are worth attending to in both the monumental and the minor arts of Mesopotamia (i.e. Cifarelli 1998). Faces may be depicted with mouths open, sometimes with articulating tongues; bodies may be turned away from combat, suggestive of impending defeat or rout, or may be straining, contorted, or disordered in futile resistance (Figs. 7-8).[46] If intriguing, it is worth noting that this type of study is not likely to yield any very significant insight into the very specific emotional states of being of

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[44] This is true, too, of the literary arts: the various *Chaoskampf* narratives extant from Mesopotamia, for example, may share a common framework and superficial plot and yet vary significantly in their nuances and ultimate implications; see, for example, specifically on *Enuma elish*, Sonik 2008, 2009, 2012b, 2013a.

[45] A detailed consideration of the Archaic smile, its derivation, its variations, and the range of its possible and plausible significations is presented in Stieber 2004: 49-55.

[46] The juxtaposition of ordered (rulers, Self) with disordered (corpses, enemies, Others) bodies is notable also in contexts beyond those of the ancient Near East (see fns. 6, 43 above) and often deployed to specific ideological or even propagandistic ends. See also the arts of ancient Greece, as the red-figure "Antaios Krater" by Euphronios (Louvre G103) depicting Herakles, his face serene, wrestling with Antaios, overmastered and gritting his teeth.

the participants involved in the action: for that, as various of the contributions in this volume have noted, we must look instead to bodies and to compositions.

The study of the body and, more specifically pertinent to the topic of this chapter, of non-verbal communication in the ancient arts has been of longstanding interest to scholars, with a particular concentration of important studies focusing on Classical and medieval contexts (i.e. Aldrete 1999; Brilliant 1963; Cairns 2005; Corbeill 2004; Masséglia 2015). While the topic has been and must be pursued through written sources (i.e. Gruber 1980; Boegenhold 1999; Bremmer and Roodenberg 1991) as well as pictorial or visual ones, this is a particular field of study in which the close consideration of images is vital.

Pictorial representations of the body in Mesopotamia necessarily diverge in numerous respects from those of, for example, ancient Greece: the types of naturalism that characterized the visual arts of the latter were only briefly exploited in Mesopotamia (Sonik 2015: 162-64) for reasons that (again) had little to do with any lack in artistic or artisanal virtuosity (Winter 1998). And yet studies such as that of Masséglia (2015) on *Body Language in Hellenistic Art and Society* present practical models for research into of nonverbal communication that might be adapted and nuanced for specific application across various contexts in the ancient Near East.[47] She divides her analysis into three parts:

1) Posture (Masséglia 2015: 6), denoting "the overall arrangement of the body … [and] encompass[ing] considerations such as body weight and relationships of relaxation and tension with the body." In compositional groups, this often provides "the greatest insight into interpersonal relationships and relative social status." Of the three categories of analysis, this may seem the least relevant to any study of Mesopotamia's visual arts, in which bodies are typically conventionally rather than naturalistically rendered. And yet it would be erroneous to dismiss it wholly as a point of study: one need only consider the taut musculature of Gudea's bared and powerful right arm (Fig. 9), juxtaposed with the decorously covered features of his otherwise rather block-like and sedately posed body in his numerous royal sculptures (Winter 1989), to be reminded that internal relationships between the physical features of individual figures in Mesopotamia's pictorial contexts are worth regarding.[48]

[47] A substantial treatment of nonverbal communication as verbally expressed in Semitic languages and textual contexts (Akkadian, Biblical Hebrew, Ugaritic) was published already by Gruber in 1980.

[48] Questions of physical coherence, and specifically of the incorporation and juxtaposition of disparate features in a single body, are worth pursuing rather further as they have significant implications also for the numerous *Mischwesen* or, better, *Zwischenwesen* (Sonik 2013b) so prominently featured in Mesopotamia's visual and literary arts.

2) Gesture (Masséglia 2015: 6-7), denoting "a discrete bodily motif, usually of the hands and arms, independent from the rest of the body." Of the three categories discussed here, that of gesture has been the most intensively exploited to date with respect to Mesopotamia's (especially Assyria's) pictorial arts (Gruber 1980; Magen 1986; Goldman 1990; Fox 1995; Cifarelli 1998; Bonatz 2002 and in this volume) though much remains to be done. In seeking to understand both the emotional states of represented figures within the frame of their compositions and larger contexts, as well the emotional effects they were intended to produce within the viewer, we must indeed often look to the position of the arms and hands. It is worth noting that the emphasis on hands rather than faces as meaningful sites of communication – of narrative or action, content, and emotion – is by no means unique to the visual arts of Mesopotamia. Important studies on gesture in the Middle Ages, for example, include those of Althoff 2010; Barasch 1976, 1987a; Gombrich 1978, 1982; and Maguire 1977.
3) Body actions (Masséglia 2015: 7), denoting "those arrangements of the body which communicate a narrative." Of the three elements Masséglia identifies of body language, body actions may be the most deliberately contrived by the artist or artisan and yet are invaluable in elucidating "the relationship between social *group* and social *function*: it is clear from the distribution of body actions that certain individuals were considered suitable for certain narratives, and others not" (ibid.). Relevant here are not only those explicit narrative compositions from Mesopotamia that primarily convey historical or battle accounts but also certain iconic representations or specific display poses adopted by kings and by gods (where the latter are anthropomorphically rendered). Particularly worth analyzing is the mastery pose, which sees defeated or subjugated enemies or servants located beneath the foot of the mastering deity and which is known both from text and image (Westenholz 2000; Sonik 2015: 155ff., 177ff.).

I am inclined to separate out from the above categories – though there may well be overlap with one or the other of these depending on context – and highlight as a significant point of investigation also the extant representations (verbal and pictorial) of bodily emissions such as blood, semen, vomit, and tears. The circumstances under which these are produced and recorded may not necessarily be bound up in or associated with the *explicit* expression of emotion but a systematic analysis of these circumstances is at minimum likely to yield important related information.[49]

[49] While this thought was set in train by one of lions spewing blood or bile in the famous orthostat reliefs of Ashurbanipal (Strommenger and Hirmer 1962: fig. 250), it is *tears* as material and sensible signifiers of specific states of being that seem a particularly pressing topic to pursue. Even a cursory survey of the contexts (albeit all textual) in which

As a final note on "body language," the significance of the contexts – public or private; domestic or official; legal (Charpin 2010: 43-52), medical (Scurlock and Andersen 2005: 431, 610; Wiggermann 1992: 72, 112), mythological (Sonik 2014), ritual and worship (Ornan 2005: 76-90, 118ff.), warfare (Bahrani 2001: 125-29), and specific landscapes (Collins 2006) – in which bodies pose, gesture, or undertake action, and in which the objects bearing these bodies are displayed or erected, can hardly be overlooked. Systematically defining and understanding such contexts in Mesopotamia specifically is complicated both by the fact that two (or more) contexts may interpenetrate in unexpected or unfamiliar ways and, again, by the fact that contexts delineated in written compositions may be rendered unrecognizable in or even significantly diverge from those emphasized in pictorial sources. Nevertheless, this remains an important next frontier in the scholarship on the body in Mesopotamia, and on embodied emotional and other states of being.

### *3.3.2. Emotional evocation and the production of emotional states of being*

If we recognize art as, at minimum, a social medium relying on the presence of the audience (Masséglia 2015: 6) or even, and particularly so with respect to Mesopotamia (as in the case of the *ṣalmu*), possessed of some degree of agency and personhood (Gell 1998: 126ff.; Pongratz-Leisten and Sonik 2015: 12; Sonik 2015: 162ff.) in its own right, any investigation of emotion and art (visual, literary, performing) must necessarily consider the interaction between the artwork and the beholder.

It is unsurprisingly difficult, at a distance of several millennia, to reconstruct the types of emotional responses that individual (art)works would have produced in the ancient audience or beholder. The famous example of Ashurbanipal's gorgeously executed lion-hunt reliefs (Fig. 10) offers a case in point: was the audience actually intended to sympathize with the dead, dying, and suffering beasts as they spew blood or bile; collapse in ago-

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weeping and tears occur yields striking results: in the Sumerian *Inana and Dumuzid* cycle, the hapless Dumuzid weeps and the sun god Utu accepts his tears and aids the shepherd (i.e. *Dumuzid's Dream* ll. 174, 200, 235; *Dumuzid and Geshtinana* l. 33); tears are wept by various figures – including the hero Gilgamesh, his companion Enkidu, the flood hero Uta-napishti, and the goddess Ishtar – across the range of Sumerian and Akkadian Gilgamesh narratives (George 2003: 141, 197, 205, 217, 291, 365, 456, 474, 565, 623, 637, 639, 713, 723); Ereshkigal, queen of the netherworld, sheds tears in the Akkadian *Nergal and Ereshkigal*; and the king himself (hopefully) sheds tears during the *akitu* or New Year's festival (Bidmead 2004: 78ff.). Significant studies on tears in other historical (especially medieval), socio-cultural, and religious contexts include those of Barasch 1987b; Patton and Hawley 2005; and Gertsman 2012. With respect to bodily emissions more generally in Mesopotamia, the extant corpus of medical texts (Scurlock and Andersen 2005) seems especially worth exploiting.

nized, contorted, and disturbingly human sprawls; or drag their broken bodies onwards in some futile and forlorn hope of escape and survival (Strommenger and Hirmer 1962: figs. 249-250, 255; Amiet 1980: figs. 127, 624-631; Barnett and Forman 1960: figs. 67-75)? Or, as the lions were representatives of the dangerous and chaotic wilderness, enemies to be rightfully destroyed, did their devastation evoke pleasurable satisfaction?[50] The answer, I suspect, lies somewhere in between these two possibilities.

On the one hand, the artists of Mesopotamia do not refrain, even in the most exquisitely rendered of works, from depicting the mutilation or scourging of the enemy, suggesting that some degree of satisfaction and pleasure was taken in such subject matter: the Early Dynastic Period (ca. 2450 BCE) Stele of the Vultures depicts the disembodied heads of the vanquished at the mercy of the scavengers; the Neo-Assyrian palace reliefs depict the flaying, impalement, and other mutilation of defeated enemies. On the other hand, the specific physical contortions of Ashurbanipal's lions, and the near human appearance of their bodies while splayed in suffering or death, seems to enable a disturbing *physical resonance* with, as well as empathetic response to, their pain. Freedberg and Gallese (2007: 197), exploring the functioning of bodily empathy and mirror neurons with respect to artworks in an early and important entry in the burgeoning field of neuroaesthetics, argued that:

> For instance, in the case of Michelangelo's *Prisoners*, [the beholders'] responses often take the form of a felt activation of the muscles that appear to be activated within the sculpture itself, as if in perfect consonance with Michelangelo's intention of showing his figures struggle to free themselves from their material matrix … physical empathy easily transmutes into a feeling of empathy for the emotional consequences of the ways in which the body is damaged or mutilated. Even when the image contains no overt emotional component, a sense of bodily resonance can arise. These are all instances in which beholders might find themselves automatically simulating the emotional expression, the movement or even the implied movement within the representation. Simulation occurs not only in response to figurative works but also in response to the experience of architectural forms, such as a twisted Romanesque column.[51]

While work on art and mirror neurons is ongoing, and while the mechanisms through which *images* of pain and other emotions evoke empathy in the viewer remain contested and in need of significant further study and

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[50] It is by no means an accident that the contorted poses of the dead lions mirror the contorted poses of dead human enemies in the Neo-Assyrian palace reliefs; see, for example, Barnett and Forman 1960: figs. 110-116.

[51] See further Freedberg 2006, 2008; Gallese 2011. For a nuanced consideration of some of Freedberg and Gallese's claims, see Schott 2015. See also Mallgrave (2015) on architecture and embodied mirror mechanisms.

refinement (Schott 2015), I am inclined to suggest at least the *possibility* that a physical or bodily resonance with Ashurbanipal's twisted, agonized, and broken lions might have precipitated, for the ancient viewer as well as for the modern one, a degree of emotional empathy. This and other approaches currently under development in the fields of neuroaesthetics and neuroarthistory – even if still too frequently reductive and contested – offer potential alternate entry points into the emotional states that ancient artworks did or could (and continue to) evoke or produce in their beholders.[52]

As a last note on the subject of exploring at least general emotional states evoked or produced by the artworks of Mesopotamia, the existing scholarship on aesthetics, light, and masterworks is an important resource. In her corpus of work on the subject, Winter (1994, 1995, 1999, 2002, 2003, 2012) catalogues the types of emotional reactions elicited by positive viewing experiences of artful works: these include joy, delight, admiration, and awe. It is the specific audience involved, notably, that determines the nature of the reactions recorded (Winter 1995: 2577):

> When the gods are the primary recipients of temple-building projects and of votive objects, they constitute the intended audience of the work. Their response is described in terms of direct gratification: joy, pleasure, delight … However formulaic the phrases may be, the link between *seeing* and *becoming joyful* brings clearly into focus the delight associated with the experience of works [italics mine]. Admiration or awe is the other positive response to an object … When 'the people' stand before a major work, they react to its qualities and overall effect as spectators rather than as primary recipients. The same temple or artifact that was greeted with joy by the gods evokes intense admiration when scrutinized by individual.

Winter (2002: 11) further outlines the positive attributes – "well-ornamented," possessed of "good form," "grace," "vitality," and "luminosity," "light and/or radiance;" and the wielding of "awesome power" – that, where possessed by a material, an artwork, an architectural structure, or a monument in Mesopotamia, may produce not only a positive viewing experience but also a positive emotional and even physical response. In an account preserved on the famous ninth century BCE Sun God Tablet of the Babylonian king Nabu-apla-iddina (ca. 888-855 BCE), it is reported that the king's face "beamed in exultation" and that "his spirit rejoiced" (Woods 2004: 85; Charpin 2013: 65; also CAD s.v. *râšu* 1a; *elēṣu* 1a)[53] upon beholding a clay model of the image of the sun god Shamash.

Negative viewing experiences, if somewhat more amorphous and diverse in their consequences than positive ones, are similarly worth exam-

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[52] Many of these approaches may fall under the larger umbrella of studies on emotional contagion; see also the work of Delnero (forthcoming) on the deliberate production of specific emotional states in the beholder, as grief, through practices like lamentation.

[53] See further fn. 23 above; also Sonik 2015: 179-80.

ining. This chapter opened with a passage from the SB *Gilgamesh Epic* in which the hero's grief – and all of the associated entangled emotions – were precipitated by a material, *sensible* encounter. It was only when Gilgamesh *saw* the maggot drop from the nostril of Enkidu's corpse that he accepted the reality of Enkidu's death, and the new functioning of Enkidu's body as a marker of absence rather than presence. It is significant that a similar *sight*, a sensible encounter with death, not only elicits similar feelings of grief and dismay but also precipitates the main action, the hero's extraordinary journey to the Cedar Forest, in the early second millennium BCE Sumerian narrative *Gilgamesh and Huwawa* A.

Speaking to the sun god Utu, from whom he seeks permission and patronage for his journey, Gilgamesh demands that the god *attend* to his words using phrasing that demands a similar attendance on the part of the audience. He then shares a near ekphrastic vision of *what he has seen* and his emotional and other responses *to this sight*: "Utu, I have something to say to you – a word in your ear! / I greet you – please pay attention! / In my city people are dying, and hearts are full of distress. / People are lost – that fills me with dismay. / I craned my neck over the city wall: / corpses in the water make the river almost overflow. That is what I see" (GHA ll. 21-26; ETCSL).[54] These sights, notably, precipitate not only rather entangled emotional states – dismay and grief, desire and ambition, fear and even resignation – but also tangible (if also somewhat tangled) actions. The death that he sees disturbs Gilgamesh but also moves him to attempt a great quest, one that will establish the longevity of his name and fame beyond the too-narrow confines of his lifetime: "Since a man cannot pass beyond the final end of life, / I want to set off into the mountains [this references his forthcoming journey to the Cedar Forest, where he will encounter and slay the monstrous guardian Huwawa], to establish my renown there. / Where renown can be established there, I will establish my renown; / and where no renown can be established there, I shall establish the renown of the gods." (GHA ll. 30-33; ETCSL).

It is worth reiterating here that the questions and lines of investigation introduced above will not necessarily produce *direct* insights into individual pictorial or even textual compositions. Images and texts diverge in numerous respects and may often be deployed to different ends in Mesopotamia (Winter 1985; Sonik 2014). And yet a comprehensive and multi-pronged investigation exploring even peripheral points in the extant sources is required if we are to delineate the system (or systems) of Mesopotamian emotion, on the basis of which more specific studies drawing on the written, pictorial, and material sources may be developed.

[54] On the gaze, vision, and concentrated viewing in Mesopotamia, see further Winter 2000b; Dicks 2012; Sonik 2013b.

## *4. Conclusion*

To close, the approaches and avenues of future research that have been outlined in this chapter are not intended to cast light solely on the subject of emotion; the illumination of emotional states of being may indeed emerge only partially, slowly, and as a peripheral byproduct of some of these investigations. Precluded as we are from conducting ethnographic work among the ancient inhabitants of Mesopotamia, however, these are the tools that we can reach as we begin to map out the Mesopotamian system(s) of emotion. And, given the vast and increasing bodies of written, pictorial, and archaeological evidence available to us, they may not prove such poor tools withal.

Fig. 1. The Greek hero Philoctetes on the Isle of Lemnos. Marble relief by Antonio Lombardo (ca. 1510-1515). © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Fig. 2. Drawing of the Laocoön in red chalk on paper by Filippo Agricola (ca. 1800-1857). © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Fig. 3. Saint Firmin holding his head. Limestone sculpture from Amiens, France (ca. 1225-1275). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Fig. 4. Arrest of Christ. Limestone sculpture from Amiens, France (ca. 1264-1288). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Fig. 5. Nergal and the Cyclops. Larsa period (ca. 19th-18th century BCE) Clay Plaque from Khafaje (George 2012: Fig. 1).

Fig. 6. Marble head of youth with slight smile. Late Archaic to early Classical (Transitional) period (ca. 490 BCE). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Fig. 7. Hero battling monster. Neo-Assyrian cylinder seal (Strommenger and Hirmer 1962: 190a).

Fig. 8. Drawing of alabaster relief panel from the Temple of Ninurta at Nimrud (ca. 865 BCE); Ninurta and Monster (Layard 1853: Plate 5).

Fig. 9. Diorite sculpture of Gudea (ca. 2090 BCE). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Fig. 10. A lion-hunt relief of Ashurbanipal from the North Palace at Nineveh (ca. 645-635 BCE). (Woolley 1961: 186).

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# Epilogue

# On Ancient Pictorial Representations of Emotion: Concluding Comments with Examples from Egypt

John BAINES

## *Background*

In addressing emotion and its display, this thought-provoking volume tackles an important difficulty in understanding the art of the ancient Near East, and indeed its civilizations as a whole.[1] The authors gather a wide range of evidence and approach it from a variety of perspectives, while alternate methods and discussions are offered by contributors who comment on chapters by others. Theoretical studies in the last part supplement the visual chapters with a detailed discussion of emotion in Mesopotamian texts and a brief exploration of the contribution that research on metaphor may be able to make to analyzing ancient visual sources. The book's chapters raise numerous issues that prompt further reflection, and hopefully research, as well as situating the problem of identifying emotions in visual materials – and more widely in human behavior – in previous scholarship.

In this epilogue I present some thoughts stimulated by reading the chapters, reflecting on nature of the problem, and thinking about how one might extend some questions. I was not present at the conference session from which most chapters derive, and the majority of contributors focus on Western Asia rather than my specialism of Egypt, so I bring something of an outsider's perspective to the discussion. This difference in perspective is significant because Egyptian images and compositions can raise distinctive issues. Most of my examples are drawn from Egyptian art, with some rather remote comparisons from western tradition.[2] It would be useful to draw the art of other civilizations into future discussions, for example that of the Maya, whose visual treatment of emotion has been most valuably discussed

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[1] I am very grateful to Sara Kipfer for inviting me to contribute an essay composed after sight of the rest of the chapters. Some of what I say resumes discussions I have published in the last few years, especially Baines 2013: 102-111, 138-144; 2015. Here I present additional arguments and illustrations, giving few references, too many of them self-citations. I owe a great deal to Robert Bagley and Angela McDonald, who read a draft at very short notice and offered comments, argument, parallels, objections, and clarifications. See also McDonald (forthcoming).

[2] See the very useful article of Alexandra Verbovsek (2011).

by Stephen Houston (2001). From a slightly different perspective, emotion is now seen as vital to all areas of archaeology because human beings, as its prime subject, are fundamentally emotional, not least in their entanglement in the material world.[3]

As several contributors remark, "emotion" as a general term is relatively modern. The same applies to a number of the abstractions used in the study of premodern cultures, and of features within them, as well as in many other intellectual domains. A relevant comparison is with the near-modernity of the term "art" as it is now used. The absence of a word does not signify the absence of a phenomenon, not least because language covers only parts of the experienced world and only a part of human thought.

I believe that neither "emotion" nor "art" needs to be legitimized as an analytical term, although for detailed research they will need to be defined and circumscribed (I do not enter into the question, discussed by several contributors, of whether distinct basic emotions can be identified and classified). Experience of feelings or affect and interest in the aesthetic are intrinsic to being human. In earlier centuries the terms "feeling", "sentiment", and "affect" were similar in semantic range to "emotion" although not isomorphic with it. "Affect" is attested in English in a parallel usage by 1400 (*Oxford English Dictionary* online, s.v. *affect, n.*). The others too are old. Demarcation of these areas of subjectivity, both of humans and of other animals, has long been part of people's reflection on the world and on their place and action in it, surely far longer than any surviving record of language, since writing appeared only a little more than five thousand years ago. In any case, language is only a partial representation of emotion, which is a holistic phenomenon embedded in individuals, in society, and in the material world. One is therefore justified in seeking evidence of thought about, and representation of, emotion in any suitably specific source, however ancient.

Pictorial representation has existed for tens of thousands of years, and for much of that time it could have depicted emotion or affect in a variety of ways, for example through groupings and associations of figures. Occurrences of such depictions are difficult to identify, however, and still more difficult to demonstrate convincingly enough to attract a consensus among scholars. As contributors note, emotions can be rendered through facial expression, pose and gesture, composition and scene content, combinations of these, and no doubt more besides. Some of these signifiers, such as particular gestures, can be specific to a culture, even to a culture's pictures. In the case of Egypt, written captions are a vital component. Facial expression can be used to depict emotion only when the scale and manner of execution of the image are detailed enough for relevant features to be recognizable. Identifying the emotion intended may require cultural understanding, and

[3] See e.g. Gosden 2004.

several chapters consider the question of how far signals of emotion are cross-culturally valid. Those who commissioned, executed, and saw images would have been a small and knowledgeable group who possessed shared understandings of their meanings, for example when they evoked narratives and their protagonists' emotions. Means for representing emotion could thus be subtle and indirect. Provided that feelings were considered to be valid parts of the content of scenes, informed viewers are likely to have perceived emotion in contexts that are opaque to modern viewers or, to put the point more strongly, to have known that in the lived or imagined context of a scene the figures or the composition would express emotion. It is not easy to learn enough about an ancient culture to approach seeing what a viewer saw.

Here western tradition, particularly Christian forms partly inherited from classical and Byzantine antiquity, can get in the way. Fundamental motifs of Christian art focus on emotions, the most obvious example being the Crucifixion. Representations of grief in that context recur across periods and styles, in varying levels of schematism and "realism". Relatively little in ancient Near Eastern or classical art, or in the art of many other traditions, has such a strong concentration on emotions of the protagonists. In seeking to identify renderings of emotion, scholars may also be unconsciously influenced by the modern sense that "good news is not news". Figures without visible emotion, perhaps especially of suffering, may seem to be too bland and without purpose – even though a scene of cruelty inflicted by indifferent-seeming figures can have a more powerful impact than something that is more overt in expression. I argue below that impassiveness has positive connotations that become comprehensible in particular through considerations of context and hierarchy.

A rather different question from those mentioned is: whose emotions is the interpreter concerned with, ones that the figures within a composition communicate to one another, or ones that the patron and the creator intended to arouse in the viewer? An image might affect a viewer – including a modern viewer – emotionally whether or not its creator intended it to do so. Modern people focus on faces, and psychological experiments suggest that we are hard-wired to do so. Cartoons and caricatures exploit this propensity to communicate through faces. A corollary for the present argument is that pictorial traditions that show impassive faces and favor whole bodies as loci of meaning are prone to misinterpretation by modern viewers who expect emotion to be expressed in the face. Such reasoning, however, can only have limited import, because less elaborate images in ancient traditions use similar approaches to those of modern caricature. In later sections I suggest that powerful factors gave preference to communication through whole bodies while social conventions restricted the expression of emotion on both elite faces and bodies.

The broadest implication of these points is that viewers cannot help attaching meanings to images, including emotional ones, and creators seek to influence those meanings. Patrons and artists in antiquity can hardly have thought otherwise. Essentially the same applies to artistic traditions that are primarily ornamental, because these too necessarily rely on interaction between image and viewer; they may not seek to convey pain but many surely aim to achieve responses of awe and wonder. These considerations bring out some of the difficulties involved in searching for and interpreting representations of emotion in ancient art. In the present essay I focus on what patron, artist, and the small additional audience envisaged by them are likely to have understood as expressing emotion. Our responses to their images need to be pruned down as far as possible to what is plausible for an ancient context.

## *Limitations and possibilities: Egyptian examples*

Two points alluded to above are crucial. First, there may be reasons for not expecting to find overt indications of emotion in pictorial compositions. Second, we may not be in a position easily to identify such indications where they are present.

As to the first point, the large majority of works surviving from antiquity have a formal, often public character in which the rendering of emotion would probably be seen as out of place (I return to this below). For elite individuals if less for kings, images in the forms that survive in significant numbers were very costly.[4] The material was mostly produced for tombs or other places where it would ideally remain available for all time. Moreover, representation was in some sense creation: to create an enduring image of suffering would need to offer some perpetual advantage, and it would be inappropriate to show the tomb owner, as chief beneficiary, in distress. While vast numbers of "scenes of daily life" (a designation that needs to be within quotation marks) survive from ancient Egypt, the nexus of their meaning is in the interplay between the small-scale genre motifs in many sub-registers and large-scale figures of the patron, typically a tomb-owner and often accompanied by his family, who is shown in repose (Fig. 2). To depict suffering among the small-scale figures was acceptable in a few contexts, but hardly otherwise. Royal monuments were presented as upholding the integrity of world order and thus provided a setting for depicting adversity so long as it was properly countered.

An analogy for the "scenes of daily life" can be drawn with treatments in 16th-17th century Netherlandish genre painting.[5] Such paintings graced

[4] Images on furniture and fabrics might have been equally costly, but hardly any survive to be studied. Compare, however, the painted box of Tutankhamun (Fig. 9).

[5] See e.g. Franits 2004.

the rooms of elite houses, whose inhabitants in a sense completed the compositions by their presence with the images around them, although unlike Egyptian patrons they often did not assert a claim to ownership of what was shown. Members of the Netherlandish elite were depicted, for example in portraits, richly dressed and in a static demeanor that might be compared with Egyptian statuary, or with the figures of owners within large Egyptian compositions. The repose in portraits of the Netherlandish elites contrasts with the range of activities of figures from the lower orders in their genre paintings. Earlier works often caricature the lives of peasants, while some later ones include images of abject living that throw the privileged life of the elite into relief. When emotion in shown in a patron or major subject, as in the "Laughing Cavalier" of Frans Hals (1624; in fact slightly smiling), this has traditionally been seen as a significant innovation. All this could as well be said of Egyptian works, but scholars have tended to focus not on the contrasts of demeanor between elites and subordinates but on the restricted display of elite emotion. One reason is perhaps that family bonds are prominent in Egyptian art, with spouses often touching each other and children holding on to some part of a parent's body or accoutrements, and this display of contact may be felt to conflict with the impassivity of faces. Yet it is likely to have been thought inappropriate, even unseemly, to show on the face what was indicated quite clearly in another way, and the same quite probably applied in a Netherlandish context. In Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini wedding portrait of 1434 (Fig. 1), a married couple hold hands but have expressionless faces; the work's meanings are expressed in other ways.[6]

Another reason for underestimating the display of elite emotion in Egyptian works might be that such content is expressed in ways that are difficult to recognize or are not simply visual. The content of most compositions is positive, and emotions of pain and suffering, which tend to be more easily identified than contentment, are seldom to be expected, again in part for reasons of permanence. The captions to "scenes of daily life" in tombs often mention the happiness of the owner/patron, both where he is actively hunting in the marshes and in the much more frequent examples where he (very occasionally she) observes but does not participate. In Old Kingdom (third millennium) examples these things are said to be "exceedingly good to see", or the owner is "seeing all the perfectly delightful things that are done throughout the land" (Fig. 2). While he watches his facial expression is neutral, as is his pose except where he relaxes by lounging on his walking stick, but the informed viewer knows that a major purpose of the whole is pleasure. Although the setting is in the countryside, it can be

[6] The interpretation of those meanings is not surprisingly controversial. For a relatively recent proposal that the wife was deceased, see Koster 2003.

luxurious, with a richly colored tent as a shelter against sun and wind.[7] A temporary structure can also be the setting for an elaborate performance of music and dance.[8] Numerous scenes extend the pleasurable aspect to subordinate figures, some of whom may be elaborately dressed, or a harvest scene may be accompanied by music while the workers exchange witty banter.[9] Their pleasure is presumably depicted for the owner's benefit, but it is shown as meaningful within the groups, as well as being made the more convincing by details such as variations among registers of language in the captions. If one is to summarize the content of such compositions, its core is the tomb owner's exalted presence and pleasure at what he observes.

The banquets depicted in New Kingdom tombs, especially of the 15th century BCE, show some relevant motifs among the elite participants. For example, drunkenness is mentioned and sometimes depicted by such artifices as decorously vomiting figures, or where servants attend to the needs of seated men with cleaning cloths, reviving concoctions, and a steadying hand around the head (Fig. 3). Here too, humor leavens compositions that may at first glance seem rigid. These scenes are striking because a number of them show the living and the dead together, a context that might seem inappropriate for the elements of levity that are nevertheless clearly identifiable,[10] especially through the captions, which complement and enhance the visual content. There was no need to make pleasure explicit in the figures and their expressions: the viewer could supply it, and the writing spells it out.

It is much rarer for scenes to show pain and distress, and these are almost always limited to inferiors. I give a few examples. A man brought before a 5th dynasty tomb owner (ca. 2350 BCE), perhaps for defaulting on rent, is held in a painful pose and has his mouth open in complaint[11] – open mouths being exceptional in human figures, as in many artistic traditions. The scene is on the exterior of a tomb and balanced by one of hunting wild cattle; the combination clearly asserts order, type-casting the suffering man as a troublemaker. A case that is harder to interpret is given by a pair of groups in a set of registers of bread- and beer-making in the roughly contemporaneous tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep (Fig. 4). In the lower register a woman has to nurse a baby while at the same time tending a bread oven, shielding her face from the heat with her more or less free hand (the baby is offered no such protection). In the register above, a child clings

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7 See e.g. Wild 1966: pl. 135, reproducing a mid-19th century copy by Emile Prisse d'Avennes made when more painted detail was identifiable.

8 E.g. tomb of Ti: Baines 2014: 25 fig. 2.

9 Compare Vernus 2009-10.

10 Baines 2014: 10, 30 fig. 7.

11 Baines 2009-10: 129, with fig. 4. Compare the administrators, one of them stripped of his clothes, who are arraigned before scribes in the tomb of Ti from the same period: Wild 1966: pl. 178.

to a woman while she kneels and grinds grain on a stone. These groups are in a "domestic" context, and the women's difficulties could be understood either as routine or as showing sympathetically the troubles of young mothers earning their keep.[12] Their facial expressions offer no guide to their feelings and no easy cue to the viewer. Strikingly, this tomb includes one of the few cases where a woman has a less than idealized face: the wife of Niankhkhnum is shown with heavy features, a fleshy jaw, and little bodily ornament, whereas the damaged parallel figure of his probable twin's wife has a finely carved face and large amounts of jewelry.[13] This distinction can hardly be said to express emotion, but it is strongly individualized, with only one of the two figures conventionally beautiful and luxurious.

In 12th dynasty tombs (ca. 1950-1770 BCE) an extensive range of maltreatments is shown, most of them probably of estate staff; malnourished and crippled desert herdsmen are also depicted.[14] The suffering figures depicted on the large and high decorated walls are often too small for details to be easily visible, but the physical, and presumably emotional, impact on the sufferers is clear. For this period textual sources of two types complement such images of humiliation. The first type is literary instructions, some possibly of the early New Kingdom, which reveal much of elite attitudes to subordinates. They also offer an in places pessimistic view of the burdens of a king's role, spelling out often dismissive attitudes that fit with the tomb images. For royalty, very individual faces of statues of kings Senwosret III (Fig. 5) and Amenemhat III of the late 12th dynasty that have over-large ears (a feature appearing already a couple of generations earlier) and furrowed brows and are thought by many scholars to show care and worry appropriate to a divided society with troublesome lower orders. Roland Tefnin suggested that the treatment of the ears and eyes alludes to the king's duty to be attentive to his subjects and strenuously vigilant on their behalf.[15] The careworn facial types of the kings may be idealizations that show them as mature individuals with heavy responsibilities, complementing the much more widespread youthful ideal, which is retained on the bodies of the statues below their heads. A pair of relief figures on a lintel of Senwosret III from Medamud near Thebes renders the two different ideals, confirming that they are complementary.[16] Whatever the precise meaning of the royal type, its facial renderings were quickly disseminated to elite statuary, in which the range of bodily types was wider.[17] There too it may

12 On meanings of such actions in the domestic context, see also Roth 2002.
13 Moussa / Altenmüller 1977: pls 46-47; Harpur / Scremin 2010: 306-307.
14 Treated in detail by Margaret Maitland (2015), who also analyzes implications of literary texts for these questions.
15 Tefnin 1992.
16 Louvre E 13983, cited by Tefnin (see previous note) and best reproduced in Drioton and Du Bourguet 1965: [174]-[175] fig. 38.
17 For an outstanding group of examples, see Habachi 1985.

signify responsibility and age, but how far specific emotions are involved is not clear.

The second textual source relevant to images of humiliation is the unique 11th dynasty stela of the Theban "scribe–sculptor" – the content of the text would fit with his being a relief sculptor and painter – Irtisen, which is also discussed by Cornelius in his chapter in this book (reign of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep, ca. 2000, a century or more earlier than the material just mentioned).[18] This text employs rare and unparalleled phraseology, and its interpretation is far from assured. The obscurity is probably in part deliberate. The protagonist asserts that "I know every secret of hieroglyphs (the less widely used script) and the conduct of festivals. (As for) every magical spell, I have equipped (myself) with it, without any of it passing me by". A few lines below he says "No one is outstanding in any of this except for me alone, together with my eldest bodily son, whom the god has decreed to excel in it for him …". Thus, the skills and knowledge involved in making pictorial representations are at least partly magical, subject to rules of secrecy, and handed down from father to son. Since representation was a form of creation and ended with a ritual performance, that is logical, and it provides powerful reasons for the absence of parallels for the text: knowledge of this sort was not public, divulging it could rob it of power, and it was not easily understood. The exceptional character of the text renders its description of images of suffering and communication among figures all the more important.

Irtisen's summary of his skills includes the statement that he knows how to render "the prostration of a single victim, the gaze of an eye at its fellow (presumably the person the eye is facing within the picture), the striking of fear before captives". These clauses can perhaps be matched in reliefs of the same reign from Gebelein, a little south of Thebes, in which subregisters that were subject to less strict conventions than the main area above have very unusual depictions of the king about to smite captives. In one case the victim is pinioned at full length alongside the king and raises a beseeching hand (Fig. 6). In the other the victim's head shrinks down onto his torso (Fig. 7). Further figures lined up behind him are presumably terrified by what awaits them, but their poses and facial expressions are neutral. The pinioning of the body and the shrinking head, which have few parallels, seem to match Irtisen's text well. A later instance of the cringing head is a figure of a bare-breasted woman prisoner about to be despatched by queen Nefertiti on a relief probably deriving from el-Amarna (Fig. 8; ca. 1340 BCE). Thus, this treatment, which is at the limit of Egyptian representational conventions, was not unique. Moreover, more vivid and extreme examples of cringing and other distortions, again straining normal conven-

[18] See E. Delange, in Wildung 2000: 60-63; Fischer-Elfert 2002. See now also Bryan 2017, with some valuable new interpretations and an excellent color photograph. The monographic treatment of Winfried Barta 1970 is unsatisfactory.

tions, can be found on the painted box of Tutankhamun from about a decade later, which bears a pair of battle scenes and another of celebratory hunts (Fig. 9). These examples suggest that the range of expression and acceptable informality employed in the freer medium of paint on smaller objects may have been wider, as is also the case, for example, with some genres of coffin painting. By contrast, the enemies in the standard scenes showing the king about to slaughter them en masse are distinguished from normal representation principally by a full-face figure at the center. This convention too signals their not belonging within proper order, but it does not render emotion clearly.

The "gaze of an eye" referred to by Irtisen has no obvious counterpart between the flanking mentions of figures dominating and instilling fear in others, and I cannot point to a relevant pictorial element among similar compositions. It would be reasonable for the figures behind the one about to be executed in fig. 7 to be gazing at each other and hence terrified. Alternatively, if the order of mentions of poses is not significant, one can imagine the phrase as referring to facing pairs of figures of equal and high iconographic status, as in the very common scenes of king and deity, some of which show them embracing (see Zwickel, p. 103 with fig. 21). In different groupings a smaller subordinate can be shown on a sub-register at eye level with a major figure so that he faces him, and their communication may be partly comparable. Be this as it may, if the other groupings that Irtisen mentions are correctly identified, they refer to extreme emotions and are rather different. As is probably to be expected, they do not focus on facial expression but on pose and composition. Although, as Cornelius observes, examples of mourning women with semi-hieroglyphic indications of tears are known from the New Kingdom, they too hardly involve distortion of the face (see pp. 128, 134, figs. 2, 7). Similarly, the face of a rare late 18th dynasty relief figure that shows strong indications of age and individuality (Fig. 10), as well as holding out his hand with its heavily lined palm in a vivid gesture, has a neutral eye.

Thus, in most examples the body and groupings, rather than the face, carry the emotional charge. As mentioned above, the same also applies to representations of maturity on figures other than the king. The fatter type of older man, a form that exhibits much variation, is likely to convey wisdom and thus mental states, but the rendering of related ideas on faces is known primarily from statuary.

Like other aspects discussed above, this exploitation of the body for communication is broadly human. "Body language" is fundamental to social interaction as well as being to a large extent culturally specific. Because it is more easily perceived from a distance and at a small scale than facial expression, its representation is well suited to large compositions. It should be drawn into any larger study of the depiction of emotion, in which it will be necessary to ask how far bodily communication displays con-

scious emotion or has different focuses of interest. Egyptian art, like a number of other traditions, has a strong focus on the body, and in that respect contrasts for example with much East Asian art, and to some extent with Mesopotamian art. This promising area of research cannot be taken further in this essay.

Another element of context should, however, be considered here. It would only be appropriate to depict painful emotions if they enhanced the meaning of compositions. In tombs it would probably be unseemly to create a suffering figure of core elite status. The two thematic contexts where strong emotions could easily be seen as positive are in the suffering of enemies – often captioned as foreign rulers – on royal monuments asserting order over the forces of disorder, and in contexts where conventions were temporarily abrogated and different ones could apply, primarily in mourning and funerals, of which numerous examples are known on elite monuments. Christina Riggs valuably observes that mourning figures can transgress bounds of pictorial conventions, as in a papyrus scene where the widow's dress spills over the register line of a composition (Fig. 11).[19]

As contributors to this book note, exceptions outside the contexts of royal triumph and funeral rituals cluster in the Amarna period under Akhenaten (mid 14th century BCE). At that time there was a deliberate, in some cases rather literal-minded reversal of many conventions of composition and rules of visual decorum,[20] an instance being images of the king and queen mourning the death of one of their daughters.[21] About a decade later, successors to these departures from convention are found in the tomb of the general Horemheb at Saqqara. The scenes in this tomb include content related to the defeat of enemies: rows of prisoners, harassed by finely-dressed Egyptian handlers, are represented in exquisite but caricature-like detail, with exaggerated ethnic features, lined and scarified faces, and on some expressions of worry and distress.[22] A few singled out, almost like specimens, for special attention and presentation, and they are rendered at a larger scale than their handlers. Horemheb later became king, and these compositions almost assert a claim to the throne.

Context and decorum are relevant also to the depiction of non-human animal emotion, a category addressed by more than one contributor to this volume. I agree with them that it is wrong to posit that the Egyptians perceived a fundamental difference between the emotions of humans and other animals. Indeed, the biggest interpretive risk here is that people will read an emotional empathy similar to today's popular perceptions into the behavior and gesture of depicted animals (see also below). Focusing on the clearest markers for emotion in images of animals may mitigate that difficulty a

19 Riggs 2013: 157.
20 Brief statement: Baines 1985: 280.
21 Martin 1989b: 43 fig. 8, pls 26-28; pp. 46-47 figs 11-12, pls 63, 68, 69.
22 Martin 1989a: pls 78-93.

little. Broadly they are comparable with those for human beings, being focused around the opening of the mouth, distinctive poses, and interactions with others. Zwickel illustrates a paradigmatic example from the late 5th dynasty tomb of Ti (ca. 2350 BCE), where a peasant is carrying across a ford a calf that looks back toward the mother cow, who returns the gaze and has her mouth open in complaint or consolation (p. 101 with fig. 17).[23] The communication between cow and calf is likely to relate to separation and potential loss, while being exploited by the herdsmen to encourage the herd to cross the water. Another, recurring bovine group shows a cow whose calf has had a foreleg amputated as part of a human funeral ritual. It is generally assumed that the lowing of the cow and calf would contribute to the noise of lamentation, in addition to other likely symbolism. Very often their distress is rendered visible by open mouths, raised heads, and grouping (compare Cornelius p. 130 with fig. 4). Drops of blood from the amputation can also be shown. In Fig. 11 the short stump of the amputated leg ends in a large smudge indicating the wound, a very rare treatment that again is outside normal conventions.

This evidence suggests that depictions of the suffering of animals could be valued both as conveying emotion and as showing how they participated – against their will – in rituals, presenting highly charged motifs that are very rare in images of human beings and render the meaning of scenes more explicit. Such treatments could add immediacy in other contexts, for example scenes of an animal giving birth.[24] A vast amount of animal behavior is shown in third millennium tomb scenes, including play, aggression, pain, and distress, much of it conveyed by mouths, tongues, poses, and groupings; significant amounts of this could be termed emotional. I return to some related questions in the final section.

### *Image, performance, and context*

Issues relating to the status of emotions in performances are raised in discussions of scenes depicted in temples, tombs, and in later periods on coffins and stelae. Rituals surrounding death, processions to the tomb, and burial constitute one major category of such performances. Examples of rituals that are less freighted with subjective meanings include the numerous third millennium processions of figures representing estates bringing produce for the tomb owner. Scholars sometimes ask whether in the former

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23 Wild 1953: pls 81, 114.

24 See e.g. Wild 1953: pl. 92A (sticking out tongue); Harpur / Scremin 2008: 179 (damaged); note also the young beasts straining at their tethers in the sub-register above, through which the mother cow's horn breaks. For the tongue of a startled bull that is being lassoed, see 103. Many relevant details of animal behavior are excellently presented in Harpur / Scremin 2008, 2010, and other books in their series.

case the feelings that may be identified in the scenes should be seen as personal emotion or as performance. For two reasons I believe that this question is not helpful.

First and more simply, a good performance convinces, so that the viewer cannot tell, and may not wish to tell, whether the emotion is acted or experienced. The same is very often true of the principal actors, whether in a religious ritual or in theatrical acting. Moreover, the role of participants in rituals such as weddings and funerals can shift seamlessly between performing and feeling; part of the aim of the event is to arouse and channel emotions. Both participants and bystanders can be caught up emotionally, and both groups are shown in some Egyptian representations of funerals.[25] The biography of an elite woman of the Ptolemaic period (2nd century BCE) states that "all of Memphis" attended her funeral, which was a joyous event celebrating a good and long life.[26] The character of the emotion involved in the rituals following a death can vary greatly.

Second, in many ways images constitute performances: they create something that conveys a coherent meaning of its own that may or may not relate to what could happen in the world but nevertheless brings something into being. In a sense images of rituals are therefore performances of performances – a point that applies as well to the Arnolfini portrait (Fig. 1) as to ancient art. Egyptian temple scenes are performances, in their case metaphorical ones: they are nearly abstract in character and do not depict actions that could occur, because in real rituals the gods would be tended in the form of small statues while the performer would be a priest who was neither the king nor someone acting his part. They constitute or perform something visually. The rituals are the core performances to which such images relate, and their depiction at a great remove from any reality is given an appearance as perfect and static as possible, in keeping with the sacrality and importance of what they present. Depiction of emotion is in many ways irrelevant to such a context, but the extensive captions to temple reliefs of the Graeco-Roman period in particular include much exchange of emotions such as love and joy on the part of the king and deities as protagonists.[27]

Performance, like emotion, is not determined solely by culture; it is part of being human, and it also occurs throughout the animal world. People compose themselves for images, and those who create images take account of this behavior. Most photographs of groups of people do not show things simply happening but render performances, however brief. To use an example mentioned earlier, people prefer not to be shown with their mouths open, unless it be in today's convention of a smile with perfect teeth. The French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908-2004) went to great

[25] E.g. a funeral procession on a late 18th dynasty relief in Berlin: Baines 2013: 240 fig. 60.
[26] Vittmann 1995: 292.
[27] See e.g. Winter 1968.

lengths to catch his subjects unawares, so that what his photographs show is not what their subjects intended. It is as if he performed for them by suppressing their performances.

Drawn, painted, and carved images are all the more likely to show a performed figure because they are created over a longer time, generally require more resources, and involve consensus between patron and executant. A figure standing at rest, dressed in symbolically significant clothing and holding insignia of office or status, is a created fiction that enacts its subject's identity. Any specific or transitory emotion does not belong in such a context. Exceptions to these patterns do not alter the point that many ancient images, perhaps a significant proportion of pictorial images altogether, should be understood, among other things, as performances. Where emotions that are performed are shown, this does not render them any the less emotions: while it should clarify matters not to ask whether depicted figures might be understood as experiencing feelings or as only displaying them, the issue of when and whether feelings are thought of as being present in images and groupings remains significant. I suggest that it will be more productive to look at scenes and compositions, rather than single figures, to advance the understanding of related issues.

The audience for performances, which affects what is shown, can be internal to the composition, can consist primarily of its viewers, or can be both. The viewing public may be as small as the patron and executants, but is generally at least a little larger. Even the vast numbers of ancient works that were partly or completely invisible after they were created and set up had some human audience, for example during a funeral, as well as addressing imagined audiences among deities or in the next world. These present and imagined publics brought with them constraints of proper comportment in the performed and depicted contexts, in which expression of emotion would be regulated so as to contribute positively to the whole. Even among the "scenes of daily life" mentioned earlier, few lack any public character within the composition, not least because of the near-universal presence of the figure of the viewing patron. His role is in itself a performance that consists of "seeing" and "delighting", not participating or expressing visible emotion.

## *Discussion and conclusion*

Perhaps the salient conclusion emerging from the topics considered above is that patterns of representation of emotion, and particularly of suffering, are organized hierarchically. The higher the status of a figure, the less likely it is to exhibit emotion. Major figures are typically impassive. Strong emotions or adverse experience can be indicated for less important people, but in general only where such details – for they are at the level of detail in

most compositions – contribute to a positive overall message. The most vivid representations of emotion may be on animals, but hierarchy is visible there too: unless it is hunting, a dog belonging to a major figure is normally at rest, forming part of the impassive group. In Egyptian art of earlier periods the principal exception to these characterizations is again in hunting scenes, among which those depicting the owner as actively involved are largely reserved to royalty and people of the highest status. In addition to their symbolic assertion of order, these compositions convey a strong message of pleasure and, in marsh scenes, of an idyll. Yet such scenes are also split in their treatment of their subject matter: with significant exceptions, the killing of birds, fish, and in desert contexts mammals, is generally shown as completed, so that emotion is not directly at stake.[28] In this respect Egyptian art contrasts with Neo-Assyrian, where the direct confrontation of royal hunter and prey is a major theme, as Zwickel notes (p. 102 with fig. 20). In both civilizations the introduction of the chariot provided a potent new locus of display while altering conventions of elite representation relatively little. Such conventions are satirized in the scene from the "Turin Erotic Papyrus", illustrated by Zwickel (p. 105 with fig. 31), of a couple having sex, the woman crouching on a chariot and the man with his mouth open in a way that is to me more suggestive of singing a song than crying out.

An important aspect of the representation of emotion in non-human animals, and in particular groups of them, is the imputation of human emotions: people implicitly or explicitly expect other species, especially domesticated ones, to communicate, both to humans and among themselves, in similar ways to humans and to be comprehensible to them. They also displace their own emotions onto other animals. Displacement contributes powerfully to what images of animals do in art, not least by making it possible to represent behavior that would otherwise be outside the acceptable range for humans. The Egyptians clearly used this strategy of displacement in the images of cow and calf mentioned above, and in hunting scenes the elite protagonist's aggression is often expressed through his dogs while his own figure is impassive.

Closely related to the impassivity of major human figures is a general avoidance of the ephemeral. Emotions that are manifest in people's faces are fleeting, and they may have been unsuitable to be depicted for that reason among others. Indications of age and experience that are also uncommon, as well as being confined to a few periods, probably do not represent emotion but rather an achieved state, as is suggested notably by the presence of both youthful and mature ideals for a king in a single relief. The setting of an image might imply emotion, for example in statues of kings in

[28] Contrast the hunting of an ibex in the 18th dynasty Theban tomb of Qenamun, an image that was copied in antiquity: Baines 2013: 88-89, with references.

a devotional pose that were set up in temples (Fig. 5), but in such cases the pose is more explicit and often more eloquent than the face.[29] The impassivity of rulers and elites is attested in many artistic traditions, and it has a clear ideological value, not just in images but also in elite behavior. Mastery of others is displayed in mastery of oneself.

Whereas major figures are mostly shown in static poses, minor figures are much more freely rendered and often form groups. When order is asserted, its adverse impact on those perceived to threaten it can be depicted, but those who enforce order hardly ever show emotion on their faces. Groups give a key to thinking about the depiction of emotion: whereas western tradition tends to focus on facial expression, many cues to identifying emotion in Egypt – and plausibly in many traditions – are in connections among figures. Other cues are in poses and in activities, as for example in gestures of celebration. It is probably less productive to focus on faces and individual figures than on body language (briefly mentioned above), groups, and their interactions.

A concept that can usefully span the hierarchy from royalty and major figures, through subordinates, to animals and enemies, is decorum. This pervasive organizing principle of Egyptian art excludes the representation of strong emotion by deities and royalty; the depiction of Akhenaten and Nefertiti mourning, mentioned above, flouts this norm. On elite figures such emotions are displayed only in particular cases, notably on widows, whose images in funeral scenes are often distinguished from those of large groups of mourners. As discussed, emotion is shown more freely on subordinate figures, but still only when what they show contributes to positive overall meanings.

Comparable meanings extend beyond human and other animal society to the settled landscape and the world of nature. Places such as cities and necropoleis evoked strong emotions, both positive and negative, that can be attributed with some confidence for images of the latter. For cities, a unique relief of the reign of Ramesses II (ca. 1279-1213 BCE) in a damaged context on the exterior wall of the Luxor temple shows a destroyed city and landscape devoid of animate life (Fig. 12).[30] From its context on the wall this must represent an enemy location, so that it fits with the general pattern that situates extremes of violence and loss in the non-Egyptian world, but the absence from the composition of anything living goes further than other examples in depicting desolation: hardly any Egyptian art that is not pure pattern is without human or animal life. Ideologically, such desolation is

[29] In addition to Fig. 5, see for example Wildung 2000: no. 57 (Amenemhat III, ca. 1780 BCE). It is symptomatic of this issue that, although numerous standing and praying statues are known, illustrations are not common because scholars and publishers are interested in faces rather than bodies.

[30] See Wreszinski 1923-35: pl. 65; Bianchi 1997; Phelps 2009.

outside the living and ordered world. The depicted desolation carries an emotional charge that is in keeping with wider ideology.

The patterning of Egyptian visual representations of emotion is thus part of the wider configuration of experience of the ordered cosmos, as well as of regions beyond its narrower definition that are seen ideologically as disordered. Such a patterning is very unlikely to be restricted to Egypt,[31] and its implications would be worth pursuing. Image worlds express and contribute to enacting the order of complex societies and their inequalities. Research on how emotion is represented thus offers one of many ways into interpreting conceptions of world order. In the Egyptian case, the higher up the hierarchy one goes, the less strong emotion is displayed; stronger expression is confined to a few contexts and to inferior orders of humans and animals, as well as of the cultural and natural world. To some extent, overt emotion threatens equilibrium and disturbs achieved order, in a pattern that reinforces the organization of an unequal society. Similar patterns can surely be found for other societies.

Fig. 1. Jan van Eyck, Wedding of Giovanni Arnolfini and his wife (1434); oil painting. London, National Gallery. Courtesy National Gallery.

[31] For the wider Near Eastern ideological context, compare Liverani 1990, esp. 33-43.

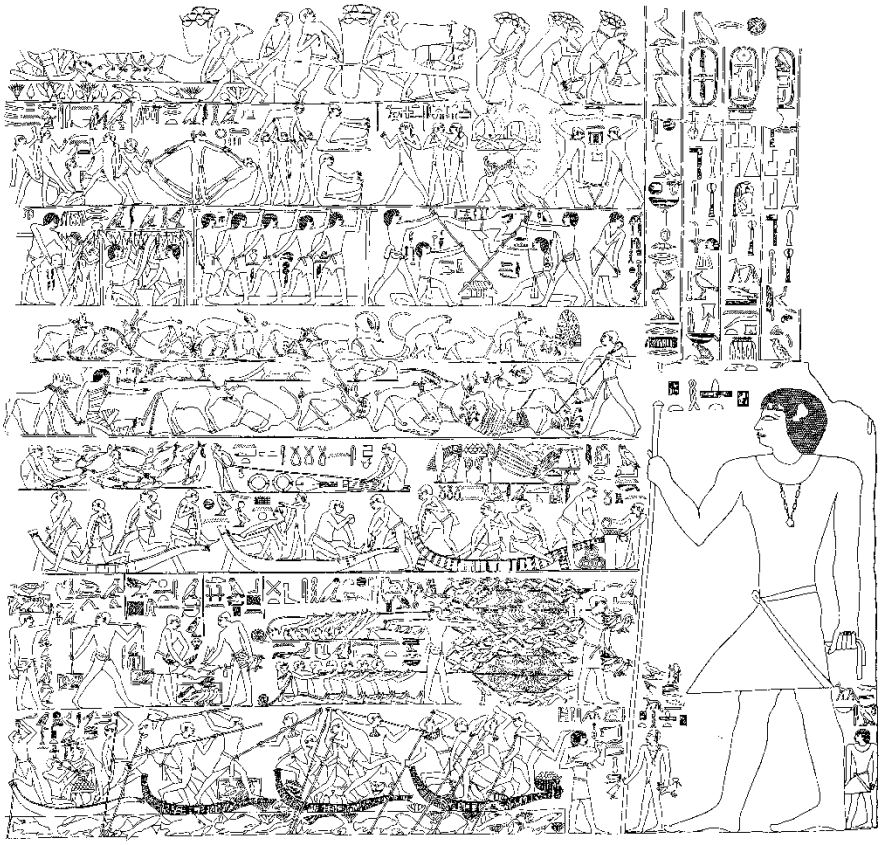

Fig. 2. Tomb of Ptahhotep II at Saqqara, offering chapel, north wall, east section. Late 5th dynasty. From Harpur and Scremin (2008: 356), with kind permission from Yvonne Harpur.

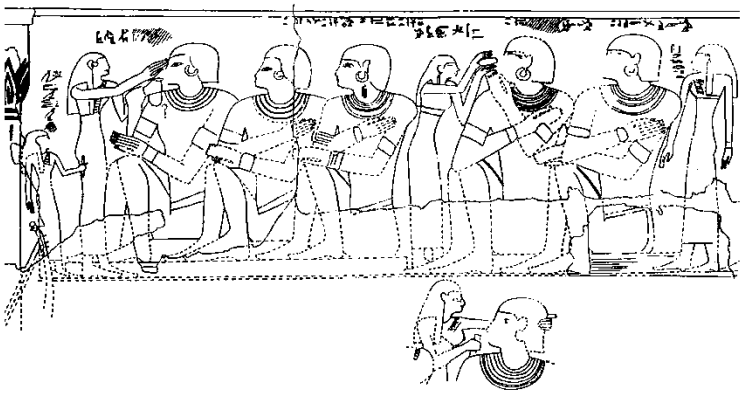

Fig. 3. Tomb of Tetiky at Thebes (TT 15), main vaulted chamber, north wall, upper register, left section, detail. Early 18th dynasty (ca. 1500 BCE). After Davies (1925: pl. iv).

Fig. 4. Tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep at Saqqara, room II, short west wall, upper registers, details. Late 5th dynasty. After Moussa and Altenmüller (Moussa/ Altenmüller 1977: pl. 23); for details, compare Harpur and Scremin (2010: 71-78).

Fig. 5. Three statues of Senwosret III (ca. 1830 BCE) in a pose of prayer, from the mortuary temple complex of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahari. Granodiorite. British Museum EA684, EA685, EA686 Courtesy British Museum.

Fig. 6 and 7. Two relief blocks of reliefs from a temple of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep (11th dynasty) at Gebelein, details of base registers. Ca. 2000 BCE. Cairo, Egyptian Museum. After Habachi (1963: pls 11a, 11b).

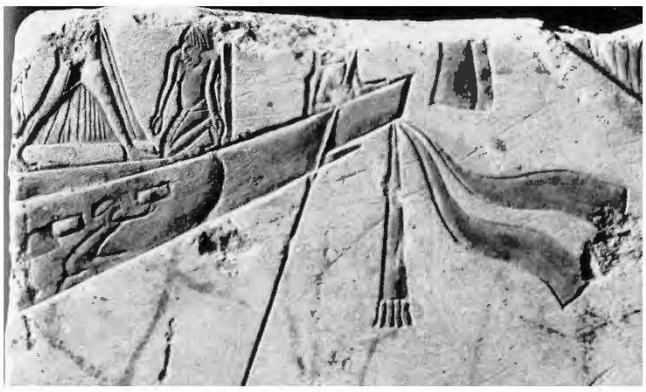

Fig. 8. Limestone relief of Queen Nefertiti about to smite a female captive, detail; probably reused at el-Ashmunein from el-Amarna. Ca. 1340 BCE, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 63.260. Courtesy of museum.

Fig. 9. Tutankhamun defeats Asian enemies. Painted wooden box of Tutankhamun from the antechamber of his tomb in the Valley of the Kings, "northern" long side, detail. Excavator's no. 21. Cairo, Egyptian Museum JE 61467. After Davies / Gardiner (1962: pl. I). Courtesy Griffith Institute, Oxford.

Fig. 10. Limestone relief fragment showing an old man reaching out his left hand. Provenance unknown. Late 18th dynasty, ca. 1330 BCE. Brooklyn Museum 47.120.1. See Riefstahl 1951. Courtesy of museum.

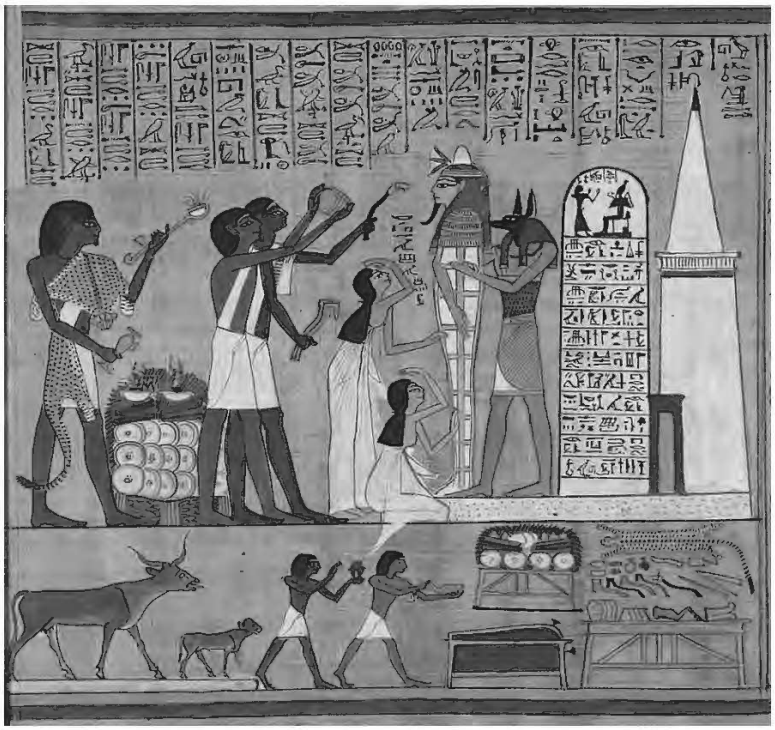

Fig. 11. Detail of vignette showing "Opening of the Mouth" and mourning rituals in the Book of the Dead papyrus of Hunefer from Thebes. Early 19th dynasty, ca. 1275 BCE. British Museum EA 9901/5. Courtesy of museum.

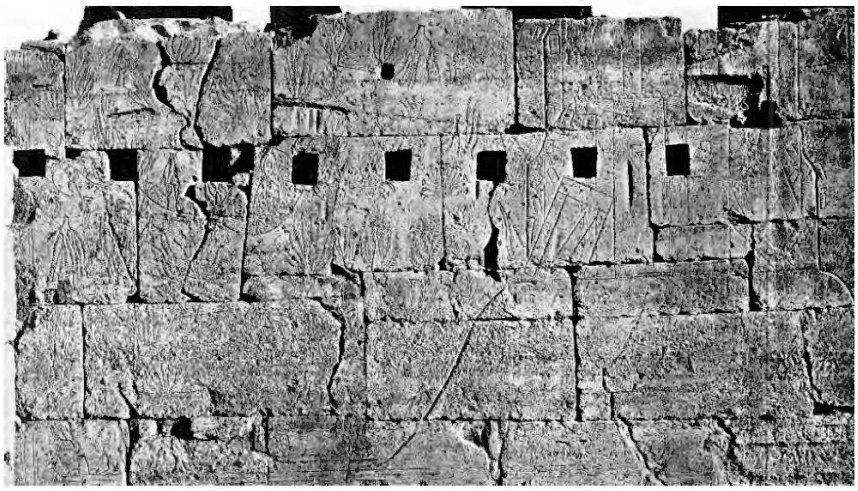

Fig. 12. Scene of a foreign city and adjacent landscape, Luxor temple, west exterior wall, north section; reign of Ramesses II (ca. 1279-1213 BCE). After Wreszinski (1923-35 pl. 65).

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*Zu diesem Buch*

Die historische Emotionsforschung ist ein wichtiges interdisziplinäres Forschungsfeld. Nicht zuletzt die Auseinandersetzungen mit Fragen um biologisch fundierte Universalien und soziokulturell bedingte Partikularität und Relativität spielen dabei eine Rolle. Konzeptuelle Inkongruenzen zwischen heutigen Begriffen von Emotion und den Emotionskonzeptionen der Antike machen deutlich, dass Gefühle eine Geschichte haben und doch grundsätzlich zum Menschsein als solchem gehören.

Das Medium Bild eröffnet andere Möglichkeiten transkultureller Untersuchung als das Medium Sprache. Es kann deshalb einen wichtigen Beitrag leisten, um besser zu verstehen, wie im Alten Orient mit Emotionen umgegangen wurde: Werden auf Bildern aus Mesopotamien, der Levante und Ägypten in Gestik, Körperhaltung, Gesichtsausdruck etc. Emotionen wiedergegeben, und wenn ja, wie? Welche Bedeutung und welchen Stellenwert hat die Wiedergabe von Emotionen in der visuellen Kommunikation?

Die Beiträge im ersten Teil des Bandes gehen anhand von ausgewählten Beispielen der Frage nach, ob und wie in der altorientalischen Kunst Emotionen dargestellt werden. Die Lösungsansätze sind kontrovers: Der These, es handle sich in keinem Fall um eine Visualisierung von Emotionen, sondern um kulturelle Rollen beziehungsweise rituelle Inszenierungen, steht die Annahme gegenüber, dass sich hinter nonverbalen Ausdrucksformen durchaus Emotionen verbergen und lediglich das spezifische Methodenrepertoire gesucht werden muss, um die bildlichen Darstellungen angemessen zu deuten.

Der zweite Teil des Bandes enthält fünf theoretische Reflexionen aus komparatistischer, linguistischer und kunsthistorischer Perspektive. Mit dieser breit angelegten interdisziplinären Diskussion – Assyriologie, Ägyptologie, Archäologie und alttestamentlicher Wissenschaft – bietet der Sammelband, der aus einem Workshop anlässlich der 61. Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale in Bern und Genf im Juni 2015 hervorgegangen ist, einen Überblick über die wichtigsten Forschungspositionen zu diesem wichtigen Thema.

*About this book*

The history of emotion is an important interdisciplinary research field, not least because it touches fundamental questions about the distinction between psychobiology-based universals and socio-cultural, path-dependent and thus relative peculiarities. Conceptual incongruities between what is today understood as emotion and various views on emotions in antiquity should not distract from the fact that, while emotions do have a history, they substantially belong to all human experience as such.

Visual media and images open perspectives for transcultural research that differ from the testimony of texts. Their study can thus make a major contribution to a better understanding of emotions in the Ancient Near East. How where gestures, body postures, facial expressions etc. visualized in images from Mesopotamia, the Levant and Egypt and what role does the visualization play in communicating emotions?

The first part of the present volume takes concrete examples as a starting point and discusses the fundamental question whether or not emotions were represented and can thus be studied in Ancient Near Eastern art. Approaches and arguments are controversial: Some authors argue that there are no visualizations of emotions, but only of cultural roles and ritual embodiments. Their view is contrasted by other contributors, who assume that one may detect non-verbal expressions hiding emotions in visual respresentations and that it is crucial to specify the appropriate tools and methodologies to interpret them in an adequate way.

The second part offers five additional theoretical reflexions from comparative, linguistic and art-historical perspectives. With such a broad interdisciplinary approach including Assyriology, Egyptology, Near Eastern archaeology and Hebrew Bible/Old Testament studies, the volume offers a large panorama of the most important research positions on a fundamental topic.

The book results from workshop discussions held in June 2015 during the 61st Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Bern and Geneva. Contributors include John Baines, Dominik Bonatz, Izak Cornelius, Margaret Jaques, Othmar Keel, Sara Kipfer, Florian Lippke, Silvia Schroer, Andreas Wagner, Elisabeth Wagner-Durand, and Wolfgang Zwickel.